# KASHMIR IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

## Democracy and Violent Separatism in India

*Sten Widmalm*

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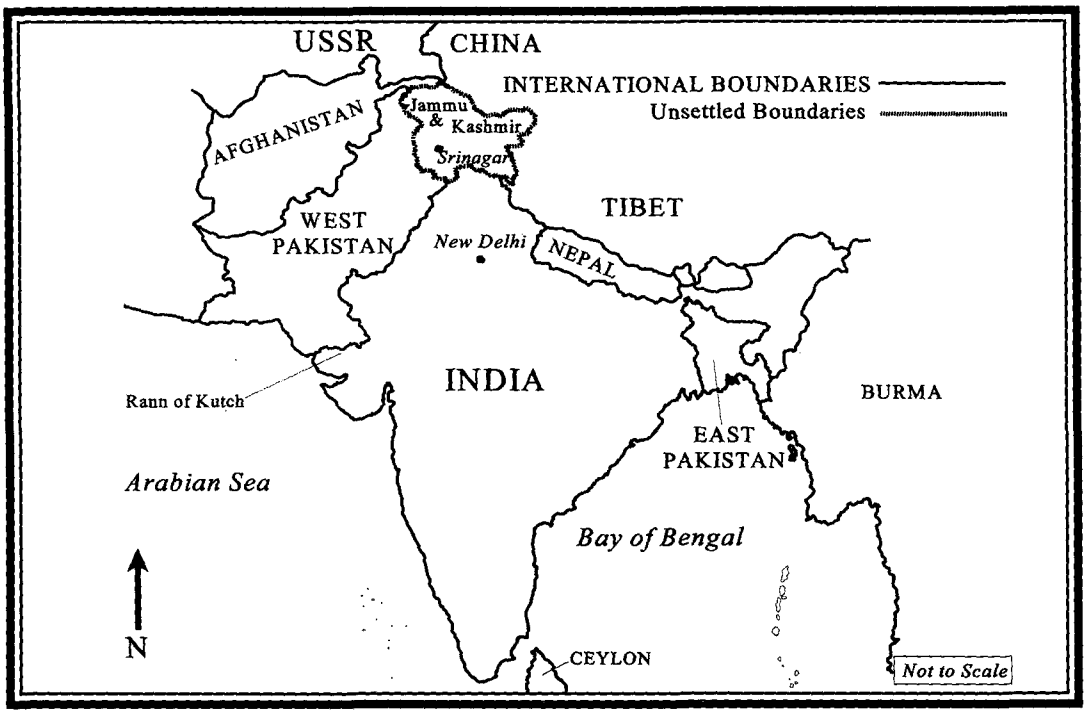
# ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| ADMK | All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam |
| BJP | Bharatiya Janata Party |
| BJS | Bharatiya Jana Sangh |
| CFL | Cease Fire Line |
| CPI (M) | Communist Party of India – Marxist |
| CPI | Communist Party of India |
| DK | Dravida Kazagham |
| DMK | Dravida Munnetra Kazagham |
| ICWA | India Centre for World Affairs |
| INC | Indian National Congress |
| IOK | Indian-Occupied Kashmir |
| JD | Janata Dal |
| JKLF | Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front |
| JMI | Jamaat-e-Islami |
| JP | Janata Party |
| LF | Left Front |
| LOC | Line of Control |
| MUF | Muslim United Front |
| NC | Jammu and Kashmir National Conference |
| POK | Pakistani-Occupied Kashmir |
| TNP | Tamil Nationalist Party |
| UF | United Front |
| UNCIP | United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan |
| UNMOGIP | United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan |

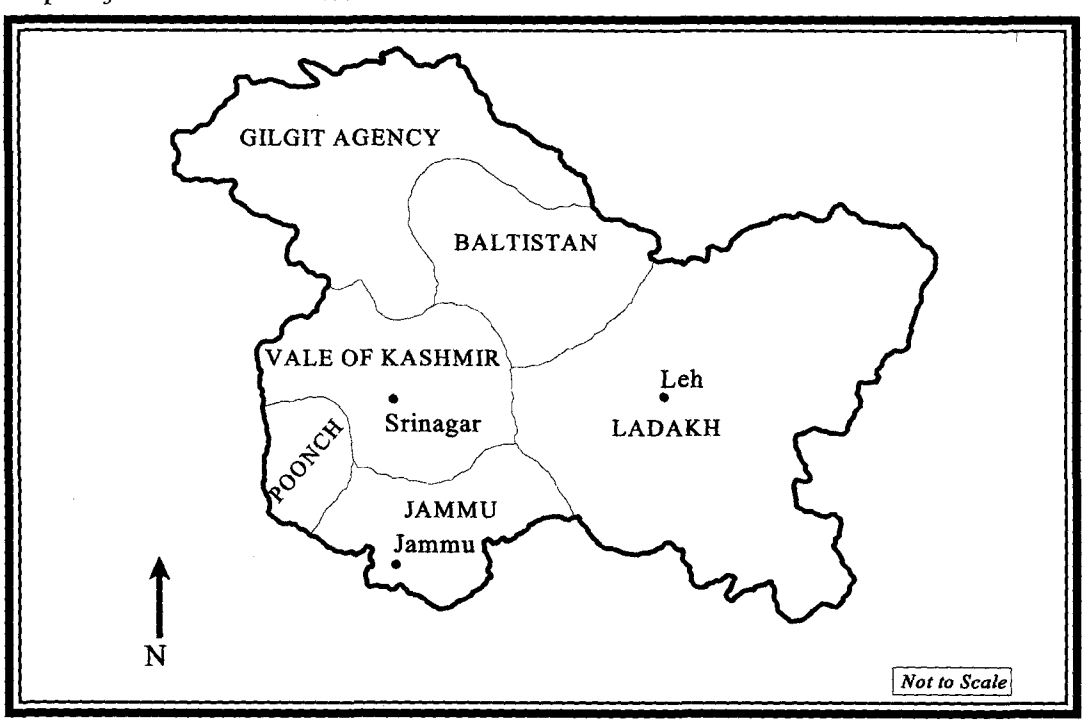
Map 1: The Indian Sub-continent: September 1947




Based on Blinkenberg 1972; Lamb 1991.

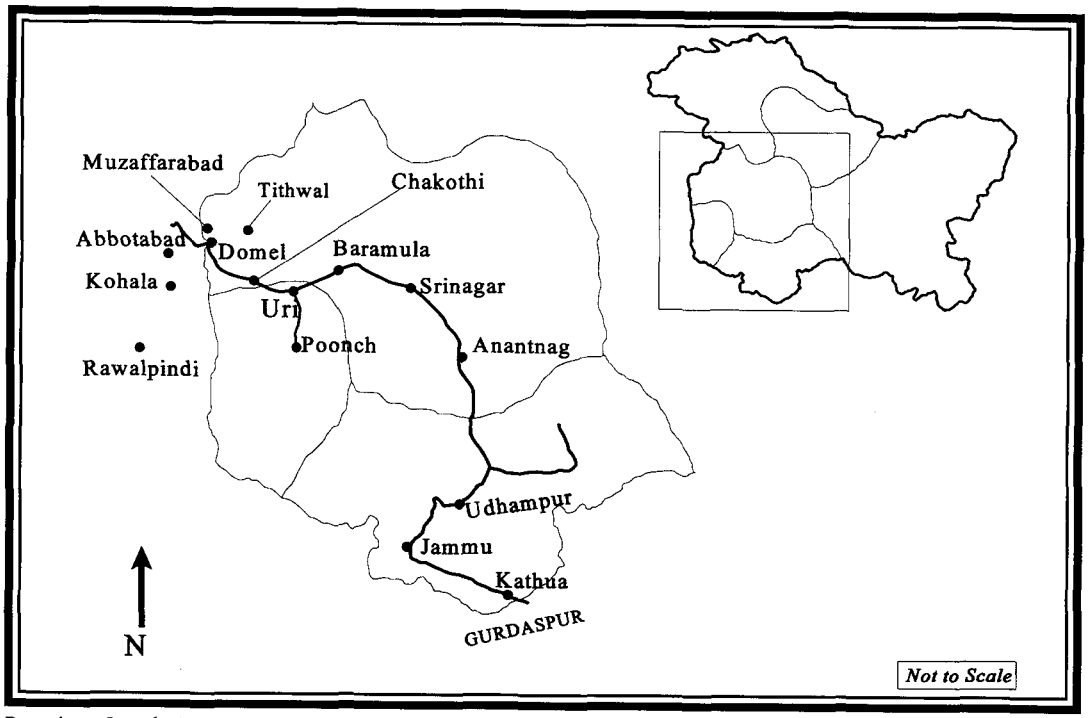


Map 2: Jammu and Kashmir: 1947




Based on Lamb 1991.

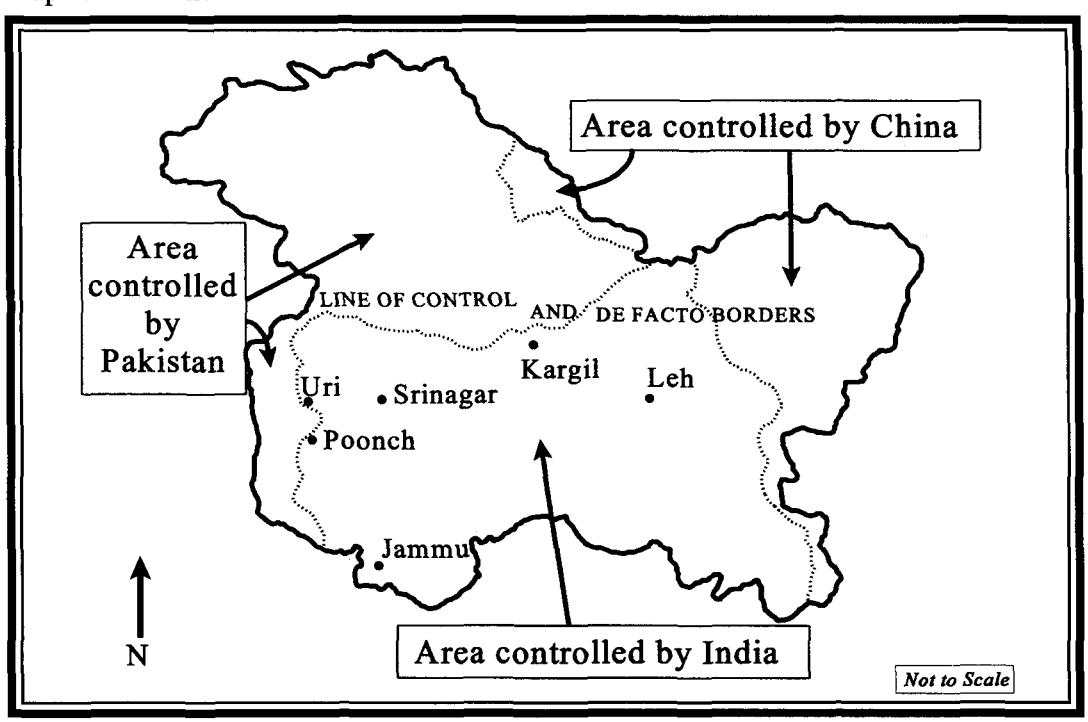
Map 3: Jammu, Poonch and the Kashmir Valley: 1947



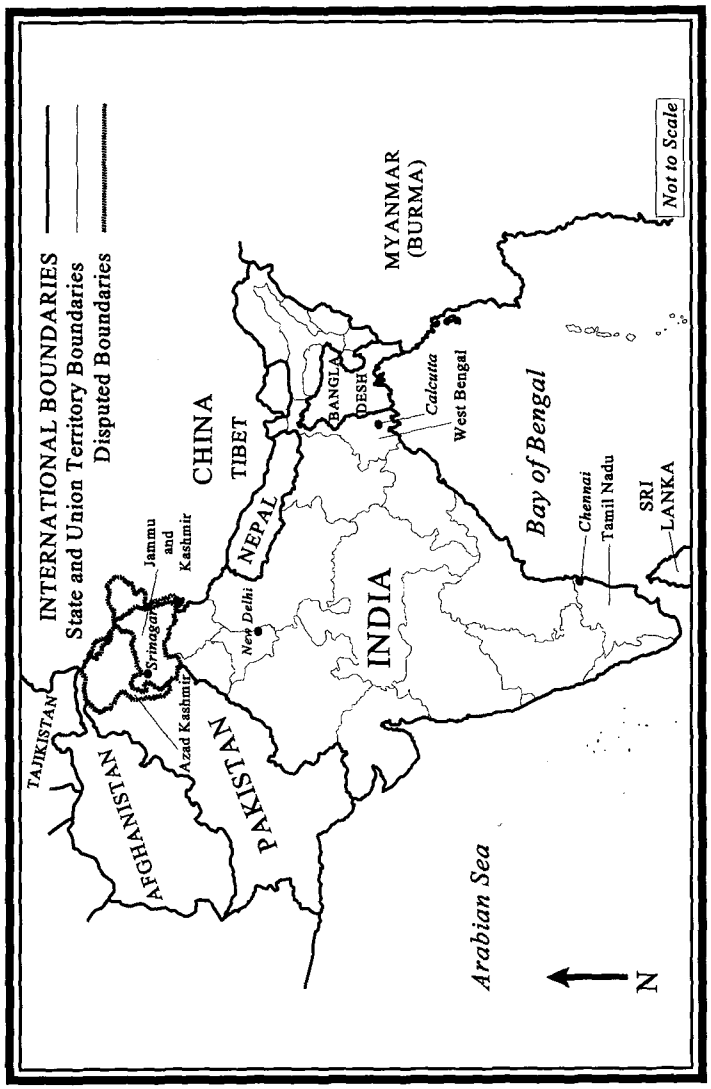

Based on Lamb 1991; Rao 1991; Cohen 1994.



Map 4: Kashmir: 1999




Based on Lamb 1991; Wirsing 1995; Blinkenberg 1972; Cohen 1994; Schofield 1996; Hewitt 1995.




Map 5: The Indian Sub-continent: 1999

Based on Blinkenberg 1972; Hewitt 1995.



# 1

# INTRODUCTION

## The questions

Why did democracy in Jammu and Kashmir give way to armed struggle, and how far can the conflict escalate before the risk of nuclear war is immanent? What looked like the democratization of the northernmost state of India in the late 1970s eventually became a small-scale civil war by the early 1990s, since when the conflict has brought indescribable suffering and possibly thirty thousand casualties. The questions to be answered in this book are: what gave rise to violent separatism in Jammu and Kashmir, could such a development have been avoided, and what does the Kashmir conflict tell us about the role of ethnicity in conflicts and the risk of large scale war in South Asia?

The lessons the Kashmir case teaches are crucial for anyone interested in the relationship between violence and politics, and some points of contention are therefore examined from a comparative perspective. Comparison with Kashmir as the case in point will be done in this book over three dimensions. First, we will compare what happened in the state Jammu and Kashmir over time to find the main causes of the conflict. Then, to illustrate what factors that were important in causing the Kashmir conflict we will compare with how the nationalist project succeeded in other states in India that one may argue had 'ethnicity against them.' Finally we will make a comparison with a higher level of politics and explore how the causes of the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir may be reproduced at the inter state level with a large scale war as a possible consequence.

## The arguments and the structure of the book

Nationalists have portrayed the tragedy in Kashmir as the inevitable result of trying to merge incompatible identities. Such

interpretations are also supported by some social science theorists. In the West, the conflict has been described as a part of the Islamization of Asia or the spread of global ethnic conflict. The latter description goes with a view of ethnic identity as something different in kind from other denominators such as class, and as therefore uniquely capable of inflaming political competition. In India, Pakistan is frequently denounced as the orchestrator of the insurgency movement supported from Islamabad and 'Pakistani-Occupied Kashmir.' In a similarly one-sided fashion, the Pakistani propaganda machine describes the uprising in 'Indian-Occupied Kashmir' as the result of economic deprivation and the suppression of the Kashmiris' wish to join Pakistan.

Nevertheless, it will be argued here that it is a mistake to see any one of these factors as the main cause of the conflict in the Indian state Jammu and Kashmir as it evolved in the 1980s. This statement takes issue with a number of theoretical claims about conflicts and their causes. The second chapter therefore examines different theoretical approaches that are relevant to a study of a conflict such as the one in Jammu and Kashmir if one has the ambition to explain it. First, different views on the role of ethnicity in conflicts are discussed. This is followed by an analysis of attempts to explain violence that share a particular interest in the economic structure and development of societies. These do not only include Marxist analysis of economic factors on a macro level and in objective terms, and the broader theory of modernization. They also include the theory of relative deprivation based on more subjective descriptions of the economic situation. Finally, political perspectives that assume that the struggle for power between elites and the character of institutions may affect outcomes irrespective of socio-economic variables are examined.

From these approaches I have extracted what may be considered the most plausible explanations. Although Pakistan has undoubtedly supported secessionists in Jammu and Kashmir, the preconditions and the impetus for the separatist movement were created within the state itself and in India in the 1980s. Poverty and inequality seem, according to the evidence available today, to have been only a secondary cause. Instead, the outbreak of large-scale violent separatism that occurred in the late 1980s and early 1990s was caused mainly by the acts of a political elite contesting power and by other political factors that helped undermine democratic legitimacy. The rules and norms according to which politics and power were pursued disintegrated into violence. In a way unforeseen by





most observers, autocratic decisions and weak institutions reinforced demands for a political unit detached from the Indian Union. Therefore, as will be argued in the coming chapters, the emergence of incompatible identities should be regarded as an *outcome* of a distinctly political conflict in Jammu and Kashmir, rather than as its *cause*. Later in the 1990s, however, the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir has become more strongly intertwined with hostilities that developed between India and Pakistan.

Viewing events from this perspective, the focus will clearly be on the development of political institutions and the decisions made by the political elite in Jammu and Kashmir and in New Delhi during the crucial period from 1975 to 1989. However, the historical conditions will not be overlooked. Chapter three will provide a short historical background to the conflict. No matter how strong the emphasis on elite and institutional factors in the final explanation, some understanding of the historical context is indispensable. One intriguing aspect of the historical background is how little the party structure in the state has changed over the years, despite periods of turbulence. In the 1930s, what was to finally become the National Conference emerged after Islamist forces had split with Sheikh Abdullah to form alternatives which proved less successful, at least if measured in their performance in democratic elections. The second largest party force was the Congress party, and this is what it has remained. When democracy was introduced in 1977, as chapter four goes on to describe, the most popular party was the National Conference. The main opponent was the Congress (I), and the Jamaat-e-Islami had trouble canvassing support. This chapter forms the core of the book. Here, I will first try to show how, for almost a decade, democracy continued to work in Jammu and Kashmir, in spite of a serious institutional decline in combination with a state-centre conflict which began as early as around 1983. A major point emphasized in this chapter, with support from original sources, is that as long as democracy performed fairly well, violent conflict in the area remained at a low level. And, as political intervention from the centre increased and the strength of National Conference declined, the incentive to resort to violence grew. Finally, this led to the widespread conflict which broke out in 1990 after a rapid escalation in violence in 1989.

The road to violent separatism in Jammu and Kashmir was not a crystal-clear story of 'goal pursuance.' Rather, it was a chaotic process where actors muddled through situations without having a clear perspective, and some ended up taking radical positions they

could never themselves have predicted. It is a much less glamorous story than the accounts of victorious nationalistic movements admired in our old history books by those who advocate a certain nationalist policy themselves.

The contrast with political developments in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal that will be examined in chapter five supports the hypothesis that violent separatism in Jammu and Kashmir was a response to political events, and not to cultural separateness. Events in Tamil Nadu in the 1950s can be said to have come close to what happened in Jammu and Kashmir in the 1980s. Nevertheless, separatism and large-scale violence were finally avoided, and therefore we will look at how this was achieved. In view of the troubled history of West Bengal, we might have expected Bengali separatism a long time ago if we simply scrutinized political events through the lens of ethnic or primordial theories. And yet, no such movement has managed to gain foothold. The alternative path this state has trodden will therefore also be considered, providing some useful insights into how a state government has succeeded in creating stability and resisting central government intervention in a democratic context. This story also provides support for the idea that democracy – sometimes considered an obstacle to the nation-building process – may be regarded as a vital component of the process of integration.

In the final analysis we will see how some patters of the evolution of politics in Jammu and Kashmir are reproduced even at the international level. How far such a comparison can be taken may be questioned, but clearly some important warning signs will be provided that cannot be overlooked. Similarly to how the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir evolved as an unforseen outcome from the pursuit of power by the political elite, in a similar fashion a large-scale war and possibly even a nuclear conflict could be the unforeseen end result of the actions taken by the national leaders in Pakistan and India. While Gen. Musharraf and Prime Minister Vajpayee fight to remain in power and keep control over Azad Kashmir and Jammu and Kashmir respectively, a scenario is not unlikely where all the isolated individual decisions taken in the area add up to an outcome that none of the parties in the conflict had planned or desired.

Finally, the conclusions are summarized in chapter six, which also contains a discussion of their theoretical implications with regard to the role of ethnicity in violent separatism.

As already suggested, there is no lack of hypotheses concerning the causes of the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir, and several of my





conclusions have already been proposed by other authors. I would claim, however, that this is an unprecedented attempt to apply social science theory to the hypotheses using new empirical evidence, in particular information based on unique interviews with central decision-makers, in an effort to explain the rise of separatism, and its violence, in Jammu and Kashmir in the late 1980s, and utilising the comparative dimensions as presented here.

## A brief note on the sources and their interpretation

The Kashmir story is one of contradictions. It has contained mixes of different religions, tolerance and integration between and among groups, and the most impressive cultural expressions. On the dark side, it also contains the tragedy of groups and nations deeply divided as a result of political machinations and scheming for power. At the level of high politics, it is a story with as many strands of deceit, distrust, jealousy and lust for power as the Mahabharata or Shakespeare's Macbeth and Othello in one. The inflamed nature of this history tends to obscure its origins. The complexity of the conflict will emerge as one of its central characteristics, and the evaluation of sources has been one of the most difficult tasks. The openness of India's democracy has, however, facilitated the retrieval of large amounts of information. Apart from some minor disagreement on the right to information with the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Election Commission, there was no interference with my work, and nobody tried to stop me investigating the roots of the conflict. In particular the insight and the integrity of the journalists that I encountered during the research have convinced me that the free press of India is one of the strongest democratic institutions in the world. The wealth of material it has produced about this particular subject is astonishing. Hopefully, the most recent trend among many and otherwise respected journalists and editors to jump on the nationalistic bandwagon is only temporary set-back.

Naturally other authors' accounts were important for my study, but as well as giving essential details of particular events, the original sources I used and, in particular, the abundance of newspaper articles enabled me to recreate the sequence of events independently. The newspaper articles quoted in chapter four constitute a small sample of more than two thousand articles that were mostly copied at the India Centre for World Affairs (ICWA) in New Delhi. The ICWA has one of the largest available collections of

cuttings from Indian newspapers covering events in Jammu and Kashmir during the 1980s. Unfortunately the lack of funding for its library is causing the rapid deterioration of the collection. Because of restraints on resources, a large proportion of the articles were never adequately marked with their place of publication, which is a disadvantage.

Archive material and interview sources will be presented as we proceed in the text, and a more critical analysis of the literature will also follow. It may be mentioned at this point, however, that there are few systematic and reliable studies of the composition of the population in the area called Kashmir. Names of groups and boundaries change over time and descriptions naturally depend to some extent on the author's scholastic background, but they are equally often influenced by politics and the polarized positions the conflict have created. Furthermore, much writing about the peoples of Kashmir is outdated in its approach, with several authors relying excessively on the work of their predecessors rather than their own fieldwork.[1] As in any other research project, the interpretation of the sources poses a difficult problem, but the guiding principle has generally been to subject controversial information to a test of *triangulation*, in other words verification from as many different sources and directions as possible.[2] In my research I have naturally tried to cross-check all controversial data derived from interviews with other sources. In some cases it has been possible to endorse certain explanations at the expense of alternate hypotheses. Nevertheless, in some cases one has to accept that there is more than one plausible version of what happened.

Considerations such as these are particularly important when studying a conflict that is still taking place. Many of the contributions on this topic are tendentious polemics on the part of the people with a stake in the conflict rather than attempts to analyse the complexities of the case. The selective use of historical accounts is invaluable in legitimizing violence, or as Hobsbawm puts it: '[H]istory is the raw material for nationalists or ethnic or fundamentalist ideologies, as poppies are the raw material for heroin addiction.'[3] And, as Tavleen Singh will point out in chapter three, some writers argue that the solution to today's conflict can be found only by going back to the historical roots. But doing so may easily turn into a project whose main objective is only to establish 'who was right and who was wrong' in different phases of the conflict. Therefore, I want to make it clear it has never been





my ambition to take a normative position on the past or the future of Jammu and Kashmir. The book will describe the complexities of the conflict and in terms of solutions this book will, at best, only point out some basic prerequisites for a peace process. The main ambition is to to understand and explain why the conflict emerged and what general conclusions can be drawn from these events.

# 2

# EXPLAINING VIOLENT SEPARATISM

In the preface to one of the many recent books on the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir, the editors describe what they see as the nature of the dispute.

> A striking cultural fact in the present Kashmir crisis is the absence of any ideological content among the militant groups in the valley. The Kashmir crisis is political in nature only at the surface. At deeper level it has much more to do with economic well being and cultural identity.[1]

This quotation serves as a good analytical starting point for several reasons. To begin with, it highlights the three categories of explanatory variable that will be considered in this study of the causes of violent separatism in Jammu and Kashmir. Although many approaches to this task are possible, cultural, socioeconomic and political theories provide most of the perspectives and explanations that are relevant to this case. Some weeding of the proposals is naturally needed in order to extract the arguments worth discussing against the empirical material. Moreover, the quotation is interesting in that it happens to represent the antithesis to the explanation offered in this book. It will in fact be argued here that cultural identity did not cause the conflict, that the socioeconomic conditions in Jammu and Kashmir were at most a secondary factor, and that it was political factors that led to violent separatism. More specifically, the last category refers more to the breakdown of institutions and power struggles among elites than to the ideological content suggested by Sharma and Mishra. Consequently, it will be argued that neither the historical nor the cultural background, nor outside intervention contains the main explanatory power for the discontent which evolved in the 1980s and which finally led to violent separatism.





That institutional factors and the actions of the power elite have contributed to, and can explain, the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir was suggested in academic contributions by Paul Brass in 1994 and to some extent by Ashutosh Varshney and Sumit Ganguly as early as 1992.[2] These authors also suggest that the mid-1980s is the key period. More recently Sumit Ganguly has used Jammu and Kashmir to give further support to Atul Kohli's argument that the combination of political mobilization and deinstitutionalization produces political violence.[3] My understanding of what happened in Jammu and Kashmir in the 1980s and the way I argue for the decisive role of political variables, however, probably owe most to the writings of Balraj Puri. His work is to a large extent based on his personal experience as a political activist in the region, but in spite of his close involvement it is not difficult to find quite objective observations that may be among the most perspicacious that have been made on the topic.[4] The ambition of this study is to complement these analyses, to examine hitherto unexplored sources and use theoretical avenues which may show *how* political variables have caused the conflict.

Obviously there are several possible analytical approaches to the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir, as also to the subject of violent political conflict and separatism in more general terms. And though the primary concern of this study is to explain a particular case of violent separatism, it will be useful to consider lines of argument that may not always exactly fit my definition of the problem. Perhaps the most vaguely defined, but also the most intensely debated nowadays, are the cultural explanations.

Theories of conflict, violence, and separatism that use culturally specific traits as explanatory components usually emphasize the role of ethnicity or ethnic factors. This field of inquiry has produced a variety of suggestions and suppositions, in particular during the last two decades and since the fall of the Berlin wall. One explanation offered for the growth of literature in this field is that ethnic conflicts have become more common.[5] Other observers claim that it is a fallacy to talk of a surge of ethnic conflict and that the recent volume of writing on the topic is more an expression of a current trend in the field of social science than a reflection of a development in the real world.[6] Be that as it may, it is widely argued that conflicts such as the one in Jammu and Kashmir are ethnic in nature, and rooted in cultural differences. Therefore, some of the more prominent of these theoretical contributions should be tested. Some precautions, however, have

to be taken. Theory development in this field has been of varying quality.

As the literature on ethnicity has expanded, so has the usage of the concept. Different authors have discussed a range of phenomena under the labels 'ethnic' and 'ethnic conflict.' It may be less problematical when 'ethnic conflict' is used only to identify patterns of mobilization in politics. In such cases the concept is used quite broadly, usually referring to language, religion or race.[7] But ethnic conflict has also come to be used as a general label of movements with diverse political goals. What used to be called civil war, insurgency, communalism or separatism has lately been renamed ethnic conflict. As will be argued here, this is not a development to be followed without realizing some serious implications. In the current debate, both academic and popular, it is often proposed that ethnic conflicts have unique characteristics and arouse irrational feelings and affecting behaviour. This is debatable. What we see here is a usage moving from the descriptive to the explanatory. It will soon be seen that the latter usage, making ethnicity an independent variable in social science explanations, may have quite a distressing content. We will therefore begin by doing our best to elucidate these underlying assumptions on the causal role of ethnicity.

In this context, it is helpful to recall the two perspectives proposed by John Stuart Mill in his discussion of political institutions in *Considerations on Representative Government*. The first regards political institutions from a top-down perspective and as an outcome of choices made by decision-makers. The second proposes the opposite, a bottom-up perspective.

> To find the best form of government; to persuade others that it is the best; and having done so, to stir them up to insist on having it, is the order of ideas in the minds of those who adopt this view of political philosophy. They look upon a constitution in the same light (difference of scale being allowed for) as they would upon a steam plough, or a threshing machine. To these stand opposed another kind of political reasoners, who are so far from assimilating a form of government to a machine, that they regard it as a sort of spontaneous product, and the science of government as a branch (so to speak) of natural history. According to them, forms of government are not a matter of choice. We must take them, in the main, as we find them. Governments cannot be constructed by premeditated design. They 'are not made, but grow.' Our business with them, as with the other facts of the universe, is to acquaint ourselves with their natural properties, and





> adapt ourselves to them. The fundamental political institutions of a people are considered by this school as a sort organic growth from the nature and life of that people; a product of their habits, instincts, and unconscious wants and desires, scarcely at all of their deliberate purposes.[8]

This succinct description captures central characteristics of the main positions that are taken in the current debate on political violence and separatism. Theories on ethnicity are commonly categorized as primordial or alternatively as instrumental or rational.[9] The latter type, which will be examined later in this chapter, exhibits Mill's top-down perspective where the type of government that evolves is a matter of choice, or rational consideration. Primordial, on the other hand, is a term commonly applied to theories describing ethnicity or attachment to national identity as something which naturally produces antagonistic political behaviour. It has features related to the bottom-up perspective Mill describes, where sentiments among the citizens decide the nature of the governing structures, and this is where we begin the theoretical inquiry.

## The ethnic factor

'Primordialism' has often been used to denote the view of ethnic identity as 'attachments derived from place of birth, kinship, relationships, religion, language and social practices' – something that is primarily based on descent.[10] These 'core features' are said to be acquired at birth, they persist through time and are sometimes claimed to provide the basis for understanding the rise and development of nations. Ethnic identity is described as a static feature and this view, in modern political science and sociology, is said to be traceable to Max Weber. Nevertheless, as far as unchangeability of ethnic identity is concerned, it is difficult to find what might be called the ideal primordialists in the literature on ethnicity and nationalism.

For example, in an often quoted article by Clifford Geertz, we find that primordial attachments are described as 'given.' But a closer reading reveals that Geertz thinks that attachments can also, to some extent, be acquired in a culture.[11] Obviously Geertz does not regard culture as entirely static. Indeed, it is even difficult to describe Anthony Smith's position on the role of ethnicity in the development of nationalism as primordial if one insists on the static

nature of ethnic identity. This is in spite of the fact that Smith argues that the idea of the nation can be traced to *ethnies* in pre-modern times.[12] Actually, most authors today consider ethnic identity a characteristic of personal identity that can change, at least to some extent, over time.

More crucial differences appear when we look at how some theorists have tried to explain violence and separatism. It is useful, I would argue, to imagine a spectrum of views within a category of theorists who agree that ethnicity is, to a large extent, the prime mover in the causal chain that leads to violence. At the moderate end we find a position that shows some traits of historical determinism. In other words, it is said that an area that has been conflict ridden in the past is likely to stay so. Ethnic divisions, which often have a historical origin, make cohabitation difficult. On the opposite side, we find writers who exaggerate this position greatly. They argue that ethnic conflicts are caused by irrational feelings or some unique form of passion that will inevitably erupt when different groups come into contact. This is not only caused by antagonism rooted in history. It is because different ethnic identities act as repelling magnets which make 'the blood in peoples' veins boil.'

A representative of the moderate position would be Donald Horowitz, the author of *Ethnic Groups in Conflict,* which is one of the most comprehensive, and influential, contributions on the topic made in the 1980s. It contains much more than just the elements of historical determinism. Horowitz proposes that 'internal dynamics' which are typical of political parties based on ethnicity, are the main cause of violent conflicts. In addition, he argues that 'economic theories cannot explain the extent of the emotions invested in ethnic conflicts.'[13] With more than a hundred examples, including many that could be labelled as violently separatist, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* takes issue mainly with theories that see the economy as the main determinant in the rise of violent conflicts. Horowitz concludes that:

> Economic interest may act either as an accelerator or a brake on separatism. Yet, among the most frequent and precocious secessionists – backward groups in backward regions – economic loss or gain plays the smallest role, ethnic anxiety the largest.[14]

His arguments are further elaborated with references to group psychology, and the emphasis is clearly placed on the uniqueness of ethnicity. This is evident from a detailed discussion of the 'conflict-





promoting character of ethnic party systems.'[15] Horowitz describes what he calls the 'ethnic two-party system' where 'the competitive behaviour of an ethnic party is limited to its own ethnic group.' This is compared to the 'nonethnic two-party systems' which is claimed to be typical in the West.[16] Horowitz argues that party competition in ethnic party systems does not take place across ethnic group lines. Nonethnic parties often tend to be controlled by 'centripetal forces' which means that competing parties on the traditional right and left chase voters located somewhere in the middle. The political positions of the parties are therefore constantly moving closer together. This is contrasted with the ethnic party system where the voters are not 'floating' in the middle between the left and right. Instead, ethnically based parties are mainly concerned with protecting their flanks, since party competition in ethnic party systems always occurs within ethnic spheres and not across them. Ethnic parties can therefore be said to be constantly influenced by 'centrifugal forces.' The parties have to watch their flanks and are therefore forced to become ever more extreme.[17] And extreme parties are naturally assumed to be more prone to take radical and non-parliamentary action. The risk of extremism is further increased, according to the author, by the fact that the incentive to use violent means may increase after an election in an ethnic party system if the outcome has been favourable to one ethnic group and left another locked in a disadvantageous position. This is a most challenging attempt to grasp certain dynamics that could explain why ethnic conflicts occur, and the role of party dynamics will be kept in mind when we go on to study the Jammu and Kashmir case. Nevertheless, some reservations concerning Horowitz' postulates are in order even at this stage.

To begin with, there is a risk that Horowitz' explanation is to some extent based on a circular argument. One of the main arguments in the above model is that conflicts are explained by the ethnic party system, but this argument builds on another premise.

> The tendency to organize parties along ethnic lines is very strong in most deeply divided societies, particularly those in which few major ethnic groups meet at the national level of politics.[18]

Reading *Ethnic Groups in Conflict,* it seems that 'deep divisions' forms a part of the definition of an ethnic party system. It is further stated that 'the main element that ethnic conflict introduce to into party politics is the ethnically based party.' It is then argued that it

was the ethnic party system that fostered ethnic conflict.[19] If this is not a circular argument, we can at least note that Horowitz' theory which claims to be able to explain ethnic conflicts, does not answer the question of why groups are suddenly politically polarized along ethnic lines in the first place.

The analysis also leaves much unsaid about how institutions – such as the public service sector, the police, party organizations, and so on – may promote or counteract ethnic mobilization and conflict. The institutions to which Horowitz ascribes great importance are the constitution and the electoral system. In particular, he examines the way these regulate recruitment to political parties. This, it should be mentioned, is a part of Horowitz' long debate with Arend Lijphart on the question of what types of constitution divided societies should have.[20] Constitutions may indeed be important but something more is probably needed in order to explain social instability. Neither, Lijphart nor Horowitz make much mention of the fact that power relations and patterns of mobilization in many of the third world states they cite as illustrations are more often determined by factors other than the intricacies of the constitution. The Jammu and Kashmir case will be used to exemplify this in the next two chapters, but there are further reasons for caution in accepting Horowitz' assumptions.[21]

We are not told clearly why ethnic parties cannot accept a minority position over an extended period. Horowitz assumes that ethnic parties are 'tactical democrats,' to use a label created by Herbert Tingsten.[22] The 'tactical democrat,' as opposed to the 'democrat by principle,' only supports a democratic system as long as there are good prospects of winning. If elections are lost, the tactical democrat abandons the democratic system. A 'democrat by principle,' however, always supports democracy, whatever the outcome for his/her own party. But doubt is cast on Horowitz' theory by the fact that parties which may be labelled as ethnic have accepted minority positions over long periods.[23]

Clearly Horowitz' ideas on the dynamics of party competition raise a number of questions, but this does not mean they should all be disregarded. Undoubtedly we can find many cases where party polarization along ethnic lines has led to problems, to say the least. As Horowitz points out, in certain situations parties tend to assume more and more antagonistic positions which may produce violence. This is what happened in Jammu and Kashmir and we therefore need to examine the connection between violence and the fact that mobilization occurred along ethnic lines. But violence can be





regarded as a symptom or outcome of other problems as well. Therefore we also need to determine, as accurately as possible, the factors that initially lead to the strong polarization of communities and the emphasis on ethnic identity in politics. The historical roots of separatist demands and antagonism among communities in Jammu and Kashmir also need to be considered. Moreover, Horowitz' idea that ethnic divides and ethnic party systems produce violence should be examined in the knowledge that such arguments come close to the more drastic position on the causes on ethnic violence. This is the extreme primordialist position where ethnic sentiments are described as sources of irrationality.

Horowitz assumes that ethnic party competition is more conflict-prone than other forms of party competition.[24] Although Horowitz makes no explicit claims, such statements are also made by writers who propose that ethnic sentiments are charged with stronger emotions than other aspects of human identity. This position belongs to a school of thought which considers heterogeneous societies inherently unstable. Michael Walzer captures the historical roots of this view:

> For Rousseau and for classical republicans generally, [patriotic feeling and political participation] rested and could only rest on social, religious, and cultural unity. They were the political expressions of a homogeneous people. One might say that, for them, citizenship was only possible where it was least necessary, where politics was nothing more than the extension into the public arena of a common life that began and was sustained outside.[25]

The classical republican position is clearly reflected in Brian Barry's criticism of consociational democracy. Barry makes certain distinctions between class, religion, and ethnicity, and argues that ethnic conflicts are more likely to cause 'acts of gross inhumanity' than church-state and class conflicts.[26] In similar vein, Pierre van den Berghe describes ethnic sentiments as a source of 'blind ferocity' and 'orgies of passion.'[27] It seems that the idea is that ethnicity is a unique factor which causes eruptions of emotion when it interacts with other ethnic identities. In a more recent work, Walker Connor has argued that ethnonationalism and genocide are caused by a non-rational core of the nation which provides unique 'emotional well-springs' that make people willing to die and kill in the name of the nation. In support of his theory, Connor refers to a number of ethnonationalist movements that have caused wide-spread suffering, and he links his argument to Freud's attempts to grasp the

'emotional source of national identity.'[28] This view is consistent not only with the opinion that Kashmiris are Muslim and therefore never will be loyal to India,[29] but also with several journalists' reports on other conflicts, as well as the one in Jammu and Kashmir, which has often been described as an ethnic conflict stemming from the 'peculiarities' of the Kashmiri mind.[30] News-reports containing analyses of conflicts often tend throw in an 'ethnic explanation' when less rational causes are obvious. The underlying idea is that what has been labelled an ethnic conflict follows a natural and inevitable path. Such interpretations are more than welcomed by political leaders who use ethnic identity to mobilize their supporters. In an attempt to establish legitimacy, Radovan Karadzic used the following analogy when describing the war in Yugoslavia.

> Tito threw us together. We were like oil and water. While he shook us, we stayed together. Once we were left alone, we separated.[31]

It is obviously not difficult to find spokesmen for what I have called the extreme primordialist position in the debate on the causes of violent conflict and separatism. Nevertheless, most forms of the extreme position can be refuted at an early stage of a more serious debate.

Although it is often claimed that there are more ethnic conflicts in the world today, there is no proof such conflicts are more bitter, irrational or inhumane than those of former times. If we agree that the English and American civil wars, and the French, Russian, Chinese, Cuban and Mexican revolutions, which involved enormous tragedies, were at least to some extent inspired by differences in class and status, we should refrain from assuming that ethnicity causes unparalleled inflammatory feelings. How are we to consider the causes of the crimes committed in, for instance, the overthrow of the democratically elected Allende regime in Chile, or by the military dictatorship in Brazil from 1964 to 1985, if we accept the idea that ethnic identities stir stronger feelings than class-related ones? It is true that atrocities such as the 'ethnic cleansing' in the former Yugoslavia or the Holocaust of the Second World War took place under the pretext of ethnic membership. It is, nevertheless, not indisputable that those inhumanities were worse than the Stalinist pogroms in the Soviet Union, the extinction of the communist party by the acts of the Indonesian government in the 1960s, or the crimes of the Pol Pot regime in Cambodia during the 1970s.[32] We cannot even assume that violent ethnic conflict tends to be more





prolonged than class conflict. The conflict in Northern Ireland is comparable in intensity and duration to the Naxalite revolt in West Bengal and Bihar in India.[33] It would be absurd to speculate on the ranking order of these inhumanities any further. My main argument is that it is a misconception to believe that political conflicts along ethnic lines necessarily result in a greater degree of inhumanity than others. In assuming that ethnic conflicts are simply the outcome of anger which has evolved solely from the interaction of different cultures, we risk overlooking the real causes of the conflicts, and collude with the self-serving logic of nationalists and extremists. The primordial position takes too simplified a view of conflicts and fails to disentangle the processes that lead up to them. These processes may begin with non-violent acts that only later escalate. And hate may breed hate, and low-scale violence may breed wide-spread violence, regardless of whether mobilization is along the lines of ethnicity or of class. It is therefore misleading, to say the least, to make general assumptions that political intensity level of conflict depend on the patterns of mobilization.[34]

Although I will refrain from formulating a definite position on the role of ethnicity until the end of the book, some other academic reactions to the extreme forms of primordialism should be considered. Several writers have already objected to use of the 'ethnic factor' as an explanation of conflict where the participants are not aligned according to class. They have argued that the identity factor should be treated more as an intermediary variable, and as something that may be shaped or used in the pursuit of power and interests that we can identify. These writers also suggest other areas where we may profitably seek the causes of violent separatism.

On the instrumentalist side, there have been studies of the way the political elite manipulates ethnic identity as a tool in conflicts with other elites. Elites cleverly exploit symbolic cultural values and this is regarded as essential to the process of political mobilization. Old values can be given quite new or different meanings and history can be rewritten to suit the political goals of the particular moment.[35] The so-called 'core features' of ethnic identity are recognized as important, but the instrumentalist adds that, in spite of inheritance, ethnic identity and its meaning change over time. This is dramatically exemplified in cases where members of certain caste groups have not reflected on their own ethnic identity until a political party one day decides to advocate reservations. This is the essence of the phenomenon of politicization of identity. And the cultural values and practices of a group are regarded

mainly as a resource for political mobilization. Paul Brass summarizes this view unambiguously:

> Consequently, whether or not the culture of the group is ancient or is newly- fashioned, the study of ethnicity and nationality is in large part the study of politically-induced cultural change. More precisely, it is the study of the process by which elites and counter-elites within ethnic groups select aspects of the group's culture, attach new value and meaning to them, and use them as symbols to mobilize the group, to defend its interests, and to compete with other groups.[36]

Brass' position is related to current ideas of ethnicity and nationalism as constructions which are not only shaped consciously for political purposes but also a side-effect of political competition. Benedict Anderson's characterization of nationalism as an 'imagined community' has proved to be a most powerful metaphor, and his explanation stresses the strong influence of historical forces such as capitalism and the development of printing technologies. Like Anderson, Eric Hobsbawm argues that nationalism did not arise until the late 18th century. The influence of historical forces is seen here as well, but in comparison with Anderson, Hobsbawm and Brass put a much stronger emphasis on the influence and power of elites and the state in creating and defining different types of nationalism.[37]

This does not necessarily imply that ethnic conflict or violent separatism can be seen only as the result of elite manipulation. But clearly, ethnic conflict or a violent separatist uprising can be understood as something more than a spontaneous outburst of uncontrollable emotion. If interests can be defined, the realm of rationalist theory automatically becomes relevant. The recent and well-argued contribution in this theoretical field comes from Russel Hardin, who argues that rationalist analysis and game-theoretic approaches can be successfully applied to ethnic phenomena and violence among groups.

Hardin efficiently dismisses the ideas of, for example, Walker Connor.[38] Instead, he looks at ethnic conflict as a collective action problem and finds that the matching of self-interest and group interest is the formula for radical action on a large scale that easily can 'tip over' and become violent. His discussion refers to several examples of violent separatism and ethnic violence around the world. With Yugoslavia in mind, he argues that conflict was not inevitable and that the rise of violence cannot be explained simply





by saying that the Tito era put a lid on ethnic hatred which later was allowed to come out. Much of Hardin's discussion of Yugoslavia is based on Misha Glenny's *The Fall of Yugoslavia*, but it may also be added that Carl-Ulrik Schierup was quick to reject primordial theories of this kind about the war in Yugoslavia. Instead, he showed that polarization can be seen as a result of structural and economic change. Schierup goes back as far as to the constitutional reforms of 1974, which, he argues, created a logic for mobilization where economic political interests would, more than before, match the identities in which parties were to be polarized in the war.[39] Such observations will be kept in mind when analysing the Jammu and Kashmir case.

In conclusion, this critique implies that factors other than ethnicity must be examined when trying to explain violent separatism such as in Jammu and Kashmir. It is also necessary to take into account the interaction of both actors and structures and how other variables, besides ethnicity, influence outcomes. What has been suggested is that we involve the socioeconomic and political factors, and these will be further discussed in the rest of this chapter.

## Socioeconomic development and conflict

Ethnic theorists often contrast themselves with Marxists who they argue, act symptomatically in trying to interpret conflict based on mobilization along ethnic lines as some sort of hidden class struggle.[40] The core of this criticism is that analytically Marxism never coped well with ethnic conflicts. Since Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels declared that 'the working men have no country' the nation has been regarded as a 'historically transient category' by several Marxist theorists.[41] Industrialism was supposed to create economic units without boundaries, as a result of which nationalism would finally have to exit the historical stage. Without going as far as Craig Calhoun, who writes that the recent ethnic and nationalist mobilization is 'an embarrassment especially for Marxists,' one can at least point out that ethnic and nationalist mobilization was not expected by social scientists of the Left in the 1970s.[42] Marxist theory seems to have failed to predict the increase in the importance of nationalism.[43] Nevertheless, Marxist or Marxist-influenced socioeconomic theories may still contribute hypotheses which are useful to this study. The strains of development and socioeconomic differences may well help to produce the discontent that spillover into violent separatist movements. Class is

not synonymous with ethnic group, but we can often observe class differences between groups in society who have an antagonistic relationship. This does not mean that we should try to resuscitate old and ideologically burdened forms of Marxist theory. It will suffice to consider seriously the relationship between socioeconomic development, discontent, and violence.

In the previously quoted article by Clifford Geertz, it is argued that the road to modernity leads to situations where traditional ethnic identities may clash when confronted with the demands of the integrative process associated with the modern state. This view was reinforced by the work of Samuel Huntington who, in the 1960s, argued that the phase between traditional society and the modern – the modernization phase – is associated with political instability:

> The relationship between social mobilization and political instability seems reasonably direct. Urbanization, increases in literacy, education, and media exposure all give rise to enhanced aspirations and expectations which, if unsatisfied, galvanize individuals and groups into politics. In the absence of strong and adaptable political institutions, such increases in participation mean instability and violence. Here in dramatic form can be clearly seen the paradox that modernity produces stability and modernization instability.[44]

Huntington claims that instability in societies, including that referred to as ethnic conflict and violent separatism, usually arises from the failure of political institutions to cope with the social change accompanying modernization and rapid economic growth. His portrayal of the evolution of societies from traditional to modern resembles Émile Durkheim's. While traditional and modern are considered as normal, the phase between them – modernization – is considered pathological, and one of its symptoms is ethnic conflict. Among several institutional factors, Huntington focuses on political parties and claims that a highly developed, or modern, institution is characterized by adaptability, complexity, autonomy, and coherence.[45] The argument that functioning and impartial institutions are crucial to political peace, needs further examination. As will be shown later, however, analysis of institutions need not imply acceptance of the value of modernization as an explanatory variable.

It can also be added that theorists who attribute ethnic conflict to the strains of modernization often refrain from discussing cases where parties have been mobilized along ethnic lines before





modernization. If the term ethnic conflict refers primarily to the phenomenon of division on grounds of religion, region or language, is it not necessary to include cases from pre-modern times as well? Also it is still not certain that ethnic conflicts are more common today than in earlier times.[46] Furthermore, Tilly reminds us that Ted Gurr's well-known study in 1970, which includes over one thousand cases of violent action categorized as turmoil, conspiracy and internal war, 'generally ruled out the pace of industrialization' and urbanization as a causal factor in conflicts.[47]

On a more general level, we should also question the assumption that modernity can be seen as a universal and specific evolutionary phase of history. Peter Manicas is on the mark when he challenges Durkheim's assumption that societies follow a unilinear and evolutionary path and that societies are characterized by 'pathological' or 'normal' development.[48] His criticism inspires for raising similar questions about some of the maxims of modernization theory.

Naturally this school of thought cannot be dismissed in only a paragraph. I would only take the opportunity to enlarge on my scepticism concerning modernization as an explanatory variable. With Manicas' objections in mind, it should be noted that the modernization school of thought is based on an idea of societal evolution where complex societies and states emerges from primitive forms, and this conclusion is drawn from interpretations of development in the West. When nations of the third world, or the formerly colonized world, have a hard time getting on the same path of development that the West did, the conclusion is drawn that they are stuck in an anomaly. This is explained as a transition phase which will disappear when the modern phase is entered. To my mind this interpretation of development is too formalized and the recent history of South Asia produces too many question marks concerning the validity of modernization as an explanation. The idea is that societies are supposed to move from traditional to modern, but evidently the opposite is also happening. In Pakistan for example literacy rates have declined during recent periods. Studies in India, for instance, show that a major factor that has caused the governability crisis in India is the process of deinstitutionalization.[49] Using the indicators of modernization chosen by Huntington we must conclude that the unilinear evolutionary path and the consequences predicted by modernization theory are questionable. With this, there may not be so much left of the idea of attributing conflict to modernization, at least as modernization is normally defined.

What is more, it is difficult to demonstrate that modernization always eradicates traditional values. Huntington proposes that modernization creates a 'gap' in identity which is often filled or replaced by religious or fundamentalist ideas. The 'Hinduization of India', for example, is filling such a gap of lost identity caused by modernization.[50] This hypothesis may be valid if applied to some followers of the Hindutva movement, but in many other cases it is simply wrong. It does not take into account the historical background of the rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party – the Hindu nationalist party that has gained increased political power during the last fifteen years. It misses the fact that the BJP and Hindu nationalism have a history that goes much further back than the events of the last three elections. A large part of the rise of Hindu nationalism or chauvinism has been constructed, shaped, and altered during the course of history which implies that conflict is not simply caused by the eradication of identities or values. People in societies that experience industrialization, increase in literacy rates, increase in calory intake, and so on, cannot simply be assumed to lose their cultural identity. On the contrary, old values may survive for a long time although they may eventually be expressed in new ways. And at the same time, value systems are always, to some extent, changing. For example, the work of Pamela Price on South India has shown that importance of values persists in spite of radical structural changes.[51] In several cases, long standing traditional values have been reinforced by the factors that can may said to be a part of modernization. The way identities are transformed is obviously far more complex than what modernization theory would suggest. If nationalism has been 'an uncomfortable anomaly for Marxist theory,'[52] it seems that something similar could be said about the place of ethnicity in modernization theory.

Certainly it may be quite useful to employ concepts such as modernization and modernity in making broad historical descriptions, but when we try to create independent variables from these ideas, we run into trouble – at least in this case. Nevertheless, this does not mean that socioeconomic factors can be discarded in our search for the causes of violent separatism. Undoubtedly lack of economic development, or large-scale changes, may cause frustration and discontent, which may be expressed in demands for separate state.[53] Over the last twenty-five years there has been interesting research into inequality both as subjectively perceived and as objectively measured, and some of this deserves to be kept in mind.





The association between inequality and violence was systematically tested in the 1970s by Ted Robert Gurr, who produced a theory of the effects of relative deprivation. The term relative deprivation refers to the gap that may appear between an individual's expected and real well-being. In more exact terms, Gurr defined relative deprivation as 'the tension that develops from a discrepancy between the 'ought' and 'is' of collective value satisfaction, and that disposes men to violence.'[54] Since then, several academics have expanded on this theme and used relative deprivation to highlight the way conflicts can develop without the economic situation necessarily changing in objective terms. For example, a group may be severely economically underprivileged without any violent conflicts emerging if the group is unaware of the situation of other groups. A conflict, however, may develop and escalate when groups compare their situations and gain a broader view of their situation. The crucial factor is a group's perception of itself in relation to other groups. Hence the term relative deprivation, which will be considered in the Jammu and Kashmir case.

Just like modernization, however, relative deprivation presents problems when considered as explanation for violence. Although it is possible to show that relative deprivation is a factor referred to by parties in a conflict, we know less about how large the gaps have to be to trigger violence. With hindsight it is easy to say 'the gap was large enough,' but this is not satisfactory. Paul Brass convincingly argues that almost all movements that threaten social order claim that social inequality gives legitimacy to their political goals – whether the movement represents a rich group or a poor one.[55] With this critique in mind it is clear that subjective measures of deprivation, revealed in for example in-depth interviews, need to be completed with other more objective sources. This takes us further in to the field of research involving large databases with globally collected information, which has produced fascinating results on how more objectively measured indicators of development relate to the prevalence of conflicts.

In a comprehensive study Edward Muller and Mitchell Seligson found that great inequality in land and income promotes high levels of political violence. Furthermore, they and other researchers have established that semirepressive regimes also can explain mass violence. It seems that a government must either be totally oppressive or absolutely liberal in its treatment of political opposition if it is to avoid large scale violent protest and instability, and it is naturally the latter strategy which is the only option in a democracy.

> Another problem faced by all governments is that the use of coercion against dissidents – closing down their newspapers, preventing them from assembling in public, and imprisoning them or killing them if they disobey – seems in the short run to provoke violence rather than deter it. If the political system is open and liberal, however, the rate of coercion-provoked violence will usually not reach regime-threatening proportions because the presence of meaningful nonviolent possibilities of influencing the political process will inhibit the ability of revolutionary-minded dissidents to mobilize large followings. Also, if the political system is so repressive that dissidents have little or no opportunity to organize, then coercion-provoked violence probably will not become regime threatening. The worst strategy for preventing regime-threatening rates of mass political violence would seem to be that of attempting to suppress opposition by acts of coercion while at the same time maintaining a semirepressive regime structure that permits some organization and expression of discontent but does not give dissident groups genuine opportunities to participate effectively in political decision making. Were this strategy to be pursued by the political leadership in countries with high levels of income inequality and/or a high potential for separatism, the results of our cross-national analysis indicate that the likelihood of a high level of political violence and protracted civil war would become very strong.[56]

These findings should definitely be kept in mind when we consider the case of Jammu and Kashmir, but then we will take more of a micro study approach to the problem. Although data on economic development on a high aggregate level may point to certain conclusions, the situation on the ground, or within a narrower perspective, may point another way. The quotation above, however, suggests that economic status is not the only factor with a natural place in this discussion. The reference to semirepressive government guides our interest towards factors related to power and political influence that may be independent from socioeconomic factors. In the debate on the causal relationship between inequality and violence, Kurt Schock proposes that political opportunity structures can have a moderating effect on political violence.[57] Gurr also shows that the state and its institutions can play a crucial role in the development of discontent. Such findings correspond well to institutionalist approaches using more detailed case studies. Current research mentioned so far urges us to focus more attention on the state, institutions and what may be labelled political variables. And naturally it may be mentioned that the statistical studies





in no way make the case studies redundant. On the contrary their importance is emphasised. However, as always with studies on a high aggregate level, the insights into the more intricate dynamics that lead to conflict are not obtained.

## Political explanations

Karl von Clausewitz' definition of war as 'merely the continuation of policy by other means'[58] was moulded by his experience of the militarized 19th century Prussia, but should not be forgotten when studying conflicts today, including those of a violent separatist and/or ethnic nature. The historian Alf Johansson points out that Clausewitz' remark was more than an observation, it was a maxim. For a war to be meaningful, it has to be subordinated to political goals.[59] 'Force – that is physical force /.../ is thus the *means* of war, to impose our will on the enemy, is its *object*' Clausewitz claimed.[60] It is interesting to note that Nehru observed, in *Discovery of India,* that Clausewitz' insights are anticipated in the discourse on realpolitik presented by the Mauryan adviser and chief minister Chanakya in *Arthashastra*, more than two thousand years ago.[61] An understanding of the rationale behind the strategy of violence is relevant and, indeed, essential to the study of separatism in Jammu and Kashmir. Clausewitz' statement of principle clearly suggests that organized violence should be seen as a political act, a strategy consciously utilized to obtain certain political goals. This need not go so far as the rationalistic theoretical approach adopted by Hardin. We must avoid an overemphasis of the rationalistic perspective since violent action by certain groups may also be the only desperate option in some situations, rather than the result of a careful weighing of alternatives and ordered preferences. It is, however, possible to understand and explain violence both as a result of choices and as a symptom of the character of certain institutions in society. It is quite useful to look at violent separatism from the perspective of what Atul Kohli, Joel Migdal and Vivienne Shue call a state-society approach.[62] This implies, as previously argued, that socioeconomic factors should be considered, but it also insists on the inclusion of the state and political parties and their elites in the analysis as independent influential factors that are not predetermined by the economic structure. Other writers have taken the same approach.

Tilly offers an excellent summary of his belief in the importance of political factors in causing revolutions. It is equally applicable to the study of violent separatism.

> Despite the many recent attempts to psychologize the study of revolution by introducing ideas of anxiety, alienation, rising expectations, and the like, and to sociologize it by employing notions of disequilibrium, role conflict, structural strain, and so on, the factors that hold up under scrutiny are, on the whole, political ones. The structure of power, alternative conceptions of justice, the organization of coercion, the conduct of war, the formation of coalitions, the legitimacy of the state – these traditional concerns of political thought provide the main guides to the explanation of revolution. Population growth, industrialization, urbanization, and other large-scale structural changes do, to be sure, affect the probabilities of revolution. But they do so indirectly, by shaping potential, contenders for power, transforming the techniques, of governmental control, and shifting the resources available to contenders and governments. There is no reliable and regular sense in which modernization breeds revolution.[63]

Tilly's standpoint is also found in the work of Juan Linz on the breakdown of democratic regimes. Linz argues in more detail that the crucial variables in the political perspective are the political actors, their capacities, and their formulation of political demands.

> [O]ne or a number of crises will probably have undermined the consensus of the democratic parties and their capacity to cooperate. Such crises are the result of a lack of efficacy or effectiveness of successive governments when confronted with serious problems that require immediate decisions. In the last analysis, breakdown is the result of processes initiated by the government's incapacity to solve problems for which disloyal oppositions offer themselves as a solution.[64]

What emerges as central in Linz' argument, and this should be emphasized, are processes that may undermine acceptance of the legitimacy of democracy. Linz goes on to explain that such a situation may arise when a government fails to live up to its promises. Unfortunately his argument is somewhat vaguely formulated, and little empirical evidence is supplied. Nevertheless, it is of interest to us, since the Kashmir conflict includes a phase where we clearly can see that political groups which may be described as 'disloyal to the democratic framework,' rapidly achieved increased influence. It urges us to investigate the changes in the circumstances which may previously have made the democratic structure seem worth upholding.[65] This will be discussed in more detail in connection with the case study.





Besides this, one has also to be prepared for the fact that incapacity is not the only danger. Breakdown may be a result of processes initiated by a government's capacities as well. These may include unintentional polarization, which will be considered in the case study. But even if Tilly's view sounds plausible and compelling, he is not always helpful in providing more detailed definitions of the political factors. This brings us to the more recent debate where we also find that Atul Kohli draws inspiration from Linz in a persuasive analysis of the main threats to democracy in India, including the rise of ethnic conflict. Basically, Kohli argues that the breakdown of institutions in India preceded and contributed to the rise of conflict and uninhibited ethnic mobilization. Another, more complex, factor that he identified was the pattern of power distribution in the states and how it had been challenged.

The impression is that the deinstitutionalization of party structures, and the police and the bureaucracy, is the biggest problem since laws and rules become more difficult to uphold in an atmosphere of fierce political competition. Kohli's point is that the role of the state is central and that it can be regarded as pivotal in promoting and containing conflicts. Drawing not only on the work of Linz, but also on that of the state-oriented theorists such as Theda Skocpol, Kohli suggests, although in very broad terms, that the following political variables may be considered decisive in determining the governability of a democratic state:

> [T]he quality of leadership, the leadership choices, the prevailing ideology, the degree of intraelite harmony, and the design of such dominant political institutions as the party system and legislative-executive relations.[66]

Political factors, Kohli explains, such as 'the deinstitutionalizing role of national and regional leaders, the impact of weak political parties, and the undisciplined political mobilization of various caste, ethnic, religious, and other type of groups' have contributed to the governability crisis in India.[67] For the study of the Kashmir conflicts this implies that the character of the central political parties should be carefully explored. Besides the behaviour of political actors we also have to address the question of how the character of the political parties, the bureaucracy and the state relates to the question of legitimacy of power and democracy in more specific terms.

As several empirical cases discussed by Kohli suggest, the presence or lack of rule-governed state institutions has a great bearing

on the outcome of political competition. This is also a conclusion that may be said to be supported by Hans Blomkvist in a detailed investigation of the particularistic character of the Indian state institution. Applying Weberian insights, Blomkvist concludes that the particularistic state is 'not ordered by rules or is breaking (its own) rules,' and this needs to be borne in mind when attempting to explain political behaviour in India.[68] In sum, what Kohli describes as the process of deinstitutionalization, would in the terminology of Blomkvist be an increase in particularistic traits, and this will naturally be examined in the Kashmir case.

When it comes to the quality of leadership and the leadership choices mentioned by Kohli, one may ask if bad and good leadership, or bad and good decisions, may be used descriptively but even as explanatory variables? Although vaguely expressed, the idea here is simply that the choices which lead to dramatic but unintended consequences might possibly have been avoided by a more experienced, perspicacious and informed leader. For example, Kohli's analysis of Rajiv Gandhi's leadership during the 1980s and his crucial decisions concerning Punjab show that the performance of the political leader may play a vital role in determining whether ethnic conflict will break out. We therefore need to pay attention to the context, content and meaning of political campaigns and decisions, including such problematical concepts as populism. These seemingly 'soft' variables, I think, may sometimes play a significant part in explaining why conflict breaks out at a certain point of time. What this suggests is that the political opportunity structure in which separatism may gain strong momentum is decided not only by the presence of discontent among the citizens or by the resources available to organizations that aims to pursue certain political goals. The extent or success of the advances that are being made by separatists may also depend on the political environment, and decisions by leaders may trigger an unexpected spiral of violence.[69]

It is evident that the political variables, like those proposed in the theories previously discussed, are also far from unproblematical. Kohli's political factors, for example, are often quite vague and broad. Therefore, it should be pointed out for the purposes of this study, that the main focus will be on political leaders and their parties, and the institutions on which democracy depends such as the courts, the election commission and the police. The point of labelling these political is that they regulate the distribution of power but are to a significant degree independent of the socioeconomic factors.





Actors such as a political leader or a party may take decisions that we cannot always predict from the economic context. Institutions shape politics by the logic for action they provide, and although socioeconomic conditions cannot be generally ruled out as irrelevant, this logic may have its own life.

With these theoretical considerations in mind, we have at least some guidelines for approaching the empirical case study. The analysis of the causes should enable us to say more about the variables which spark off violent separatism. The natural way to begin is with the historical background to what made the region what it is today. Moving from myth to reality, we should know for example what happened when Jalodbhava encountered Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, and why the Shaivite mystic Lal Ded may have been so important for Sheikh Nuruddin. We also need to know why Nehru was so attached to Kashmir, what happened to the Prophet's hair when it was stolen in the 1960s, and how the Lion of Kashmir was finally let out of his cage and brought, with the help of his friends, democracy to Jammu and Kashmir in the late 1970s, and much more.

# 3

# JAMMU AND KASHMIR IN TRANSITION

Is it necessary to go back into history to understand why conflict escalated in Jammu and Kashmir during the 1980s? Unfortunately a yes or no answer is too simple. It is often argued that the conflict has its origins in the unfinished partition of 1947.[1] Such statements may be accepted at a general level, but few analyses are specific in identifying the causal connection between historical events and more recent developments. All conflicts have historical roots, but do the connections with the past matter, and if so how?

This book argues that the conflict in the 1980s was avoidable. History did not decide the course that events would take. In spite of the conflict-ridden past, politics in Jammu and Kashmir saw in the late 1970s a democratic period of integration with the Indian Union on a voluntary basis. The following quotation from one observer of the conflict captures the idea well. It emphasizes the fact that the trajectory taken in the state was mainly an internal problem.

> Does Kashmir 1947 have anything, anything at all, to do with the militancy that erupted in the Valley in 1989? In my view, and in the view of many others who have regularly covered events in the Valley in the past few years, the answer is – nothing. Nothing at all. The popular uprising which has seemed at times to assume the proportions of a civil war has everything to do with misgovernance by Kashmir's rulers and serious mistakes by those who ruled from Delhi. And nearly all of this happened not just post – 1947 but post – 1983.[2]

Although I agree with Tavleen Singh, it would clearly be wrong to go as far as to say that history may be overlooked when analysing the Kashmir conflict. It should also be noted that Singh is first and foremost arguing that the history of Kashmir does not provide us with prescriptions for the future.





In the following brief historical résumé I will try to show that the conflict in the 1980s was not the only logical outcome and did not follow the natural trajectory of previous events. 'The Kashmir conflict' is often used as a label for all the violence that has occurred in the area over the past fifty, and sometimes five hundred, years. But the conflicts where Mughal, Afghan, Sikh, Dogra and British rulers have competed for power have been quite different, just as the Kashmir conflicts in 1947 and 1965 had causes different from those creating violence in the 1980s and 1990s. As we discuss this in more detail, we may better understand the positions and characteristics of different players and institutions during the period on which we want to focus. The background may also provide insight not only into the vulnerability of political institutions in the early phase of a process of democratization, but also information on how democratic institutions may be strengthened.

## Jammu and Kashmir and the conflict at independence

On 3 June 1947, only three months after being appointed the last viceroy of India for the British Empire, Louis Mountbatten announced that the transfer of power had been brought forward. Instead of on 1 July 1948, India and Pakistan would become independent on 15 August 1947. This decision has been widely blamed for the furious fighting that broke out between Hindus and Muslims, and Sikhs and Muslims, at the time of partition. The original target date proposed by the Attlee Government could have provided the time necessary to complete the transfer of power peacefully, with more carefully worked out solutions, in particular for the princely states, which had a unique position in the British Empire.

While two-thirds of the British Indian Empire was governed directly by the viceroy, the rest consisted of princely states, which were more indirectly under British administration.

> There were the 662 Indian Princes, with their principalities scattered over the country. Some, like Hyderabad, were as large as an Indian province, others were no more than small estates. But all these Princes had in common a total dependence on the British, who allowed them, in return for loyalty, to exercise despotic power over their subjects.[3]

Although the princely states varied greatly in size and importance, the drafting of the 1935 Government of India Act threw up the

question whether these states had the right to independence if the colonial powers were to withdraw from the area. For practical and political reasons, this never became an option for most of them. Nevertheless, not all states followed the path to accession smoothly. With titles echoing a lost era, the Nawab of Bhopal, the Dewan of Travancore, the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Maharaja of Jodhpur had, in the end, little chance of resisting accession to India.[4] But Junagadh and Hyderabad presented difficult cases, since their population was dominated by Hindus, whereas their rulers were Muslims who demanded accession to Pakistan and independence respectively. In Junagadh a plebiscite was held before it was brought into the union, and Hyderabad was finally assimilated by force. In Kashmir, almost the opposite situation arose. At the time of partition this Muslim-dominated state was ruled by the Hindu Maharaja Hari Singh. This had not always been the case, however.

A common way of starting to tell the history of Kashmir and the Valley is with the story of Jalodbhava (or Jaldeo, or Jaludar). Jalodbhava lived in the water-filled Valley and was blessed with the protection of indestructibility under water. However, Jalodbhava misused this gift to terrorize his surroundings with impunity and finally Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva had to drain the water and kill him. The name Kashmir is said to come from the name of a famous sage, Kashyapa, who is reputed to have helped let the water out of the lake. Naturally there are several versions of this story but this mythical background helps to explain why so many places in Kashmir are still considered holy, in particular by Hindus.[5]

Kashmir has a firm place in Hindu mythology which goes back beyond the Mahabarata, and Hindu rulers and culture played a dominant role in the history of Kashmir until the fourteenth century.[6] It should, however, also be mentioned that Buddhism was established in Kashmir with the encouragement of Emperor Ashoka during the third century BC. Evidence of the status of Buddhism in the following centuries is scanty, but the support of the Emperor Kanishka (78 to 123 A.D.) and the tolerance of the indigenous Hindu ruler of Kashmir and empire-builder, Lalitaditya Muktapida (724–761 A.D.) are recorded.

Islamic culture, which would later dominate large areas of Kashmir, gradually began to enter the area in the eighth century. The Sultans, ruling for one hundred and thirty years, accelerated the Islamization of Kashmir, which continued under the Mughal rule beginning in 1540.[7] However, the first ruler to gain full control of





Kashmir was Akbar in the 1580s. Mughal administration was terminated by the Afghans, who ruled Kashmir harshly from 1753 until the early nineteenth century. In 1819, however, five hundred years of Muslim rule was ended when the Maharaja Ranjit Singh extended his Sikh empire to the area and drove the Afghans out. Through his connection with Ranjit Singh, and as a reward for capturing the Raja of Rajaori (who was fighting the Sikhs), a Dogra Rajput, Gulab Singh, was made Raja of Jammu in 1820. Dogra rule then expanded in the area.[8] In the 1840s, however, Gulab Singh transferred his loyalty to the British and Henry Lawrence, for which he was well rewarded.[9] After defeating the Sikhs in the war of 1845, the British Empire annexed Kashmir and then simply sold it, by the Treaty of Amritsar of 1846, to Gulab Singh.

### *Jammu and Kashmir on the eve of independence*

During the following century of rule by the Dogra Dynasty, the state of Jammu and Kashmir came to include the Vale of Kashmir, Jammu, Baltistan, Ladakh, Poonch and the Gilgit Agency. Surrounded by the Himalayas and drained by many rivers, the Vale of Kashmir is one of the most fertile areas in the region, and widely known for its scenic beauty. In the present century, the overwhelming majority of the population in the area have been Urdu-speaking and Kashmiri-speaking Sunni Muslims.[10] However, it should be emphasized that Kashmir is well known for its tradition of Sufism, the mystic brand of Islam which is practised by both Sunnis and Shias, and the great influence of the local grouping of Islamic mystics – the Rishi Silsilah. The poetry of its founder, Sheikh Nuruddin, has played a considerable role in shaping the world view of the Kashmiris, according to the historian Ishaq Khan.[11] In this unique setting Hinduism and Islam developed simultaneously. It is said that Sheikh Nuruddin was suckled by Lal Ded in infancy. Lal Ded was a Shaivite mystic who reacted against the patriarchate and Brahmanism and became a wandering preacher. The famous Vakyas, or sayings, she composed 'still touch the Kashmiri's ear, as well as the chords of his heart, and are freely quoted by him as maxims on appropriate occasions.'[12] The relationship between Hinduism and Islam may be seen as a symbiotic one, as is illustrated by the fact that Sheikh Nuruddin's shrine in Charar-e-Sharif in Kashmir has continued to be visited for prayers by both Muslims and Hindus in modern times. The area is also populated by the influential Kashmiri Brahmins, the Pandits. One

of their most famous families, the Nehrus, have their historical roots in this region and, as will be discussed later, the impact of this legacy is relevant to our understanding of certain events. Kashmir is also the home of the Gujjars and Bakerwals, who depend mainly on cattle-rearing and agriculture.[13]

Situated on the plains, Jammu is largely a Hindu area, but it has also a Sikh and Muslim minority population. This is the area where the influence of the Dogras has been at its greatest and Dogri is the main language, although Punjabi is also spoken. Poonch lies north-west of North-West of Jammu and covers parts of the plains. It was transferred to Gulab Singh's younger brother, Dhyam Singh, as a gift early in the nineteenth century.[14] After a lawsuit by the Maharaja Hari Singh in 1936, the area became a part of Jammu and Kashmir. According to Lamb, Poonch at the time of partition was populated mainly by Sudhans descended from the Pathans of Afghanistan.[15] The main languages spoken are Dogri, Punjabi and Pahari dialects.[16] Although the Dogras are in the majority, the Muslim proportion increases towards the north-western parts of Poonch. Ladakh is populated mainly by the Ladakhi-speaking Tibetan Buddhists, but if the present trend continues the Muslims will soon be in a majority in this part of the state. Formally the Gilgit area was a part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir from the time of Gulab Singh until independence.[17] With the increased threat from Russia, the British took direct control of the area which came to be called the Gilgit Agency in 1889, but some authority over the area was gradually handed back to the Maharaja from 1905. The area is now called Baltistan and is mostly populated by Twelver Shia Muslims. All these areas were the parts of what was referred to as Jammu and Kashmir and the realm of the last Dogra Ruler, Maharaja Hari Singh, at the time of independence.

### *Partition and accession*

When the new date for independence was presented, the Maharaja was not the only pretender to power in Jammu and Kashmir. In the 1920s dissatisfaction with Dogra rule had been articulated among the Muslims by a group of Aligarh students that were later to be known as the Reading Room Party.[18] In 1930 this group was joined by a young and already eloquent orator, Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, who had just returned from his studies at the Aligarh Muslim University. After an incident on 13 July 1931, in which





twenty-two Muslim demonstrators were shot,[19] Abdullah, together with the Mirwaiz (Chief Preacher) Mohammed Yusuf Shah, took a leading role in the creation of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, which began to organize opposition to both British and Dogra rule. The movement was joined by other young activists, such as Mirza Afzal Beg, Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed and Chaudri Ghulam Abbas, whose names will crop up throughout our résumé of the political history of the state. Their paths would soon diverge, and when Abdullah finally died in 1982 after fifty years of political turmoil, none of them would be at his side. But in the early 1930s they struggled alongside Sheikh Abdullah, who was more popularly known as Sher-e-Kashmir – The Lion of Kashmir.

In fact political dissension appeared among the leadership almost as soon as the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference was formed. The point at issue was the political and religious character of the organisation. Unlike Mohammed Yusuf Shah, Abdullah advocated a secular party design with modern and, to some extent, socialist political aims. Before independence, Abdullah would gradually move closer to the Indian National Congress. Divisions went so deep that the Muslim Conference was dissolved in 1939. It was then that Sheikh Abdullah and his supporters formed the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference. Mohammed Yusuf Shah and Chaudri Ghulam Abbas, on the other hand, would revive the Muslim Conference in 1941, appealing to the forces in favour of a separate Muslim state and aligning themselves with the Muslim League and its leader Ali Jinnah.[20] In more practical terms, however, the emphasis of the political agenda of the National Conference at the time is not entirely simple to establish.

It has been pointed out that the National Conference advocated a separate state before the independence of India, and the New Kashmir Manifesto of 1944 is usually quoted.[21] But it should also be recalled that most accounts of the political position of Sheikh Abdullah and the National Conference during the early 1940s seem to suggest agreement with the aims of the Nationalist movement led by Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, and those of the Indian National Congress. Although the party manifesto presented a future vision of Kashmir as a communist or socialist utopia, the overall impression from available sources seems to support the picture of the National Conference in the 1940s, before the independence of India, as a party pursuing a mainly anti-colonial, and anti-Dogra programme.[22] This description by Ajit Bhattacharjea is

probably the most accurate reflection of Sheikh Abdullah's somewhat pragmatic position at the time.

> Abdullah was essentially a Kashmiri patriot who would have preferred independence had it been feasible. He was anxious to secure maximum autonomy and freedom from the Dogra dynasty that had oppressed and impoverished his people. This was reflected in the comprehensive Naya Kashmir manifesto of the National Conference that he sought to implement when he came to office. He saw the relationship with India as the best available option in the circumstances; as a partnership inspired by common ideals of democracy, autonomy, secularism and socio-political reform; not one of subservience. He was disturbed by any development that he interpreted as emanating from pressure exerted by New Delhi or as inspired by Hindutva.[23]

Another observer of developments in Kashmir confirms some of these impressions. The Swedish diplomat Gunnar Jarring, who in 1957 would become the UN-negotiator in the Kashmir conflict, had done academic research in Kashmir in 1935. Jarring attended some meetings at which Abdullah spoke, and his impression, based largely on translations, was that the movement was first and foremost anti-British.[24] Jarring does not remember any mention of *Kashmiriyat*, or the regional nationalism that is such a strong feature of today's separatist organisations.[25] According to Jarring, Kashmiri nationalism in its modern form grew mainly from the traumatic events of partition in 1947, the bitterness and intensity of which make this interpretation seem credible.

Independence finally came on 15 August 1947, but borders and states would be disputed and redefined for a long time afterwards. Of the princely states mentioned earlier, only the accession of Jammu and Kashmir, Hyderabad, Junagadh and Travancore was unsettled at independence. Nevertheless, except for the areas gained by Pakistan in 1948, these states were all incorporated in the Indian Union within a year. The accession of Kashmir, however, was the most painful and brought the most troublesome consequences.

The Deputy Prime Minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, who had become the minister responsible for the former princely states on 5 July 1947, urged the Maharaja Hari Singh to choose India, but this had little effect. Hari Singh was seriously considering independence as an option although cooperation with Abdullah towards this goal was unthinkable.[26] Abdullah was considered simply an anti-Dogra agitator and had been detained by Hari Singh for his activities. In





spite of pleas from Nehru, Abdullah was still in jail when Hari Singh negotiated with the viceroy and the Indian Interim Government on the future of Jammu and Kashmir.

There are differing interpretations of Patel's position in this matter. Some sources claim he had lost his faith in the prospect of Jammu and Kashmir remaining a part of India, others argue that he was more open-minded on this question.[27] There is, however less doubt that Jawaharlal Nehru was adamant that Jammu and Kashmir must be a part of the Indian Union. His reasons were both political and emotional.

'We were Kashmiris,' says Nehru on page one in his autobiography, written in prison in 1935. It has often been argued that Nehru's intransigence emanated from the fact that the Nehru family were Kashmiri Pandits. But, as Nehru himself points out, his ancestors had left Kashmir early in the eighteenth century. Nehru's youth and early political career are geographically more closely associated with Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh and Harrow than with Jammu and Kashmir. Nevertheless, although Jawaharlal Nehru never spent much time in Kashmir, his Pandit Nehru-Kaul ancestry meant a lot to him. Being a Kashmiri Pandit has always stood for something that goes beyond the geographical borders of Kashmir. It constitutes a strong link with a community with common roots and a high level of awareness of its exclusive position in society.

In 1916, after his marriage, Nehru spent a summer in Kashmir, and in prison in 1935 he dreamt of going back to the place of his ancestors.[28] In the summer of 1940 he returned and was overwhelmed by his feelings.

> Twelve days in Kashmir, twelve days after three and twenty years. Yet one vital moment is worth more than years of stagnation and vegetation, and to spend twelve days in Kashmir was good fortune indeed. But Kashmir calls back, its pull is stronger than ever, it whispers its fairy magic to the ears. How can they who have fallen under its spell release themselves from this enchantment?[29]

While there is no doubt about Nehru's emotional commitment, it should not be forgotten that he was also guided by geopolitical and ideological considerations in this matter. Jammu and Kashmir possesses desirable natural resources, in particular through its rivers. But it is even more important to consider Jammu and Kashmir's position in relation to China and to some extent the Soviet Union at the time. Its sensitive location gave little credibility to those like

Hari Singh who asserted that Jammu and Kashmir could be the 'Switzerland of Asia.'[30] Both Nehru and Jinnah believed that Jammu and Kashmir had to belong to either India or Pakistan. Another important consideration for Nehru was that if a Muslim majority state led by Abdullah were to join India, a definite blow would be dealt to Jinnah and the two-nation theory.[31] Discounting Abdullah, who was in jail, the fact that the three main leaders took three different positions on the future of Jammu and Kashmir resulted in a dangerous deadlock. Three days before independence, the newly appointed Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Janak Singh, tried to remove the insecurity this created by asking the leaders of India and Pakistan to sign a Standstill Agreement. However, this was not concluded before independence arrived. Decisive action became impossible after 15 August, as India was quickly thrown into a turmoil of communal violence. Internal conditions in the state gradually became unmanageable, and at the same time relations with Pakistan deteriorated.

As the political confrontation between the Muslim League and the Congress party had become more severe, support for partition of the British Empire had grown. In 1946, communal violence between Sikhs and Muslims, and Hindus and Muslims, gradually increased. By the time of independence discontent with the borders drawn by the Radcliffe Commission was particularly severe in Punjab, but the criticism also involved Jammu and Kashmir. The Radcliffe Commission had included in India parts of the Muslim-dominated Gurdaspur district along the main road to Jammu. This provoked Jinnah to say that Nehru and Mountbatten were conspiring with Radcliffe to transfer Jammu and Kashmir to India. Uncertainty about the future of the religious groups in the new states that were being created, produced open violence. The story of the mass migration of millions of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, and the casualties that followed, is one of the darkest chapters in the history of the transfer of power. Clashes between Hindus and Muslims became so severe in Jammu, that Muslims fled to Pakistan. The chaos was such that the new independent administration had no opportunity to devote its full attention to Kashmir, where tension was growing steadily.[32]

In practice, Gilgit was already lost to the independent action of Major Brown, whose Corps of Gilgit Scouts refused to allow the Maharaja's troops decide their future.[33] In Poonch, a local revolt against the Dogra rulers who had long imposed heavy taxes on the area, was organized by a Sardar Mohammed Ibrahim Khan





and escalated into an armed uprising with support from sources in Pakistan. Although the details are disputed, there is no doubt that political chaos prevailed until the fateful accession in a October 1947.

Maybe they were inspired by solidarity for their 'brothers' in Poonch,[34] or acting on the orders from the Pakistani Government,[35] or both. But regardless of their motives and whatever their numbers, Pathan tribal forces from the North West Frontier Province in Pakistan that began to invade on the night of 21 October 1947, had advanced so far by 25 October that the Maharaja Hari Singh fled from Srinagar to Jammu. The town of Domel had fallen undefended and the Jammu and Kashmir State Forces were about to lose Uri where the Pathans were moving forward from the north-west. Reports to Hari Singh from Poonch, Mirpur, and Sialkot also spoke of uprisings and intrusions by foreign forces.[36] What happened next is one of the most hotly disputed questions concerning the days of late October 1947. A common version of what happened next is, in brief, as follows.

It seems that Hari Singh asked the central government in Delhi for help on 24 October. At the suggestion of Mountbatten, Nehru and Patel agreed on the 25th, that Jammu and Kashmir had to accede, at least temporarily, to India before troops could be sent to the rescue. V.P. Menon, who was working with Patel and the Interim Government on the incorporation of the states in India, was sent to Hari Singh on the morning 26 October with the reply. It took the form of an Instrument of Accession which provided that a plebiscite to determine whether Jammu and Kashmir should belong to India or Pakistan would be arranged as soon as the situation allowed.[37] Hari Singh signed the document immediately and on the morning of the 27th the first units of one battalion and one company were on their way to Srinagar. Their first task was to halt the Pathans who now had reached Baramulla and were moving towards Srinagar.

The question most disputed is whether the Maharaja signed the Instrument of Accession before or after the Indian central government sent its troops to Srinagar. It has even been suggested that the Instrument of Accession was never signed at all, but was forged afterwards. As stated above, V.P. Menon writes in *The Integration of the Indian States* that he flew to Jammu, where the Instrument of Accession was signed by the Maharaja on the 26 October.[38] Lamb, however, presents evidence in *Birth of A Tragedy* that V.P. Menon never got on the flight to Jammu that day. Instead Menon

had a meeting with Alexander Symon of the UK High Commission.[39] The highly sensitive nature of this issue is visible in the following summary of a meeting with political leaders from Jammu and Kashmir in October 1993, including Karan Singh, the son of the Maharaja Hari Singh.

> Dr. Karan Singh's most important revelation was that he was present in the room on 26th October, 1947 when his father put his signatures on the Instrument of Accession in the Presence of Mr. V.P.S. Menon. This revelation has blasted the disinformation propaganda unleashed by some western media, including one Mr. Lamb.[40]

Nevertheless, when confronted with this quotation, Karan Singh replied 'I did not see my father sign the Instrument of Accession with Menon, but I was in the same house.' When asked about the exact date, the only reply Karan Singh would give was 'does it matter what date it was signed?'[41] Obviously this debate is not settled yet. An important contribution to the discussion has been made by the columnist and writer Prem Shankar Jha, who challenges many of Lamb's arguments on the accession. Somewhat surprisingly, however, Jha agrees with Lamb that Menon's account is incorrect, although Jha still holds that the Instrument of Accession was signed before troops were sent to Srinagar. Jha's explanation is that the Instrument of Accession was signed when Menon made his visit to the Maharaja on the 25th or early in the morning of the 26th, before Hari Singh and his family had to flee to Jammu. According to Jha, Menon supervised the signing behind Nehru's back, in a collusion with Patel and Mountbatten.[42] So, the dispute over what happened in October 1947 continues, and it is a highly politicized one. This is because the Indian Government's position that Jammu and Kashmir acceded legally to India relies heavily on the fact that the Instrument of Accession is legitimate. Moreover, any research challenging the authenticity of the Instrument of Accession is invaluable to the Pakistani Government in its claim to Jammu and Kashmir. Fortunately for this analysis, there is something in Karan Singh's comment that the issue does not need to be settled here for the purpose of determining the causes of the conflict in the late 1980s. Whether the Instrument of Accession was signed before the troops were sent in or not may, however, have repercussions on a legal debate on the status of Jammu and Kashmir. From 1947 until the early 1990s, however, it was assumed that the Instrument of Accession was signed before Indian





troops entered the State, and consequently the political disputes have mainly concerned the fact that the plebiscite was never held. What happened next, though, is less disputed. War broke out between India and Pakistan.

### *The First War between India and Pakistan and the introduction of the United Nations observers*

As the Indian forces put a stop to the Pathans' advance towards Srinagar, regular forces from the Pakistan army gradually became more involved. Although the conflict was brought to the UN in January 1948, a cease-fire agreement did not come in to effect until 1 January 1949.[43] In July 1948 the newly formed United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) arrived with the observation force. This stayed until 1951, when it was replaced by the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), which has remained in the area ever since. The cease-fire line agreed upon, which was supervised by the UNMOGIP, turned into the line of control. This subsequently became the *de facto* border between India and Pakistan, which it remains today. It extends through from Naoshera in the south, northwards through Poonch and Uri and then along the Kishan Ganga river where it turns east and continues towards Kargil.[44] Somewhat more than a third of what had hitherto been called Jammu and Kashmir came under the control of Pakistan and is now more commonly known as Azad Kashmir in Pakistan, and Pakistani Occupied Kashmir by the Indian Government. Not surprisingly, the part remaining in India is referred to by the Pakistan Government as Indian Occupied Kashmir.[45]

The border between Azad Kashmir and Jammu and Kashmir does to some extent coincide with a linguistic border. In the Vale of Kashmir, Kashmiri is common, while in Azad Kashmir various Punjabi dialects are spoken.[46] Nevertheless, the new border was as brutally established as many others in the partition of India and Pakistan. Groups who were living in peace were to become polarized for an unforeseeable future by the political events that shaped the new nations. The tragedy is to some extent illustrated by what happened to a unit commanded by a Briton, David Irving, in Jammu and Kashmir at the time of partition.

David Irving was a junior officer when he arrived in India in 1945 to serve with the King George V's Own Bengal Sappers and Miners Group. It was originally named the Corps of Bengal

Pioneers when it was founded in 1803, and for almost 150 years it admitted Muslim, Sikh and Hindu recruits in equal numbers.[47] Nevertheless, partition divided the unit along religious lines and the split resulted in the creation of the Indian Bengal Sappers and Miners for the Sikh and the Hindu personnel, while the Muslims formed the Royal Pakistan Engineers. The British Military Supreme Command was closed down on 30 November 1947 but the withdrawal of British personnel of all ranks had to proceed gradually. Therefore Irving volunteered to continue to do his service, along with some other British officers, with the units transferred to Pakistan. Shortly after the unit had split, the war broke out between India and Pakistan. In January/February 1948 Irving was on the staff of the Frontier Divisional Headquarters at Abottabad from where the operations of regular troops of the Pakistani Army were conducted. According to Irving, the Pathan tribes were set on entering Kashmir to save their 'Muslim brothers' from Hari Singh and the Indian Government, but he also adds that some of 'the more unruly elements had the possibility of some looting in their minds'[48] Irving's Pakistan Engineers received their instructions from Army Headquarters in Rawalpindi and among other work they built the jeep road from Kohala to Chakothi in the Uri sector.

> In a limited way we were asked to 'relieve the pressure' in order to evacuate [the Pathans]. It meant clearing minefields, alleviating and so on, and the Pakistanis were worried about the Indian Army coming up too close to the border. /.../ We were not meant to be there. We were disguised. We had no uniforms, vehicles had no signs, and so on. It was a clandestine operation. The mission was to help the Pathans to get out again, and we never fired nor laid any mines to my knowledge. /.../ But there were some Gurkhas captured. Fierce warriors.[49]

On the other side, however, among the troops they were fighting, were those who used to be old friends. From the beginning of the war the Bengal Sappers were sent in by the Indian side to fight. It was very probably the Indian Army that had laid some fatal anti-personnel mines in the Tithwal area of the Uri sector.[50] In July 1948 Major Sloan of the 71 Field Company, a colleague of Irving in the Royal Pakistan Engineers, was in the area directing road maintenance.

> He had visited an area in which mines had been lifted and in which mine clearance was still being done by troops of the Pakistan Army. A non-commissioned officer had just located a mine. Major Sloan said 'Let me see it' and then walked towards the spot indicated. The position was on a slope on which Major Sloan slipped, causing him to fall and to detonate the mine which killed him. This occurred at 9.15 a.m. on Saturday, 10th July, 1948.[51]





Hostility may certainly have existed between the Pathans who marched towards Srinagar and the Maharaja. But the full-scale war and the division of foes and friends was a part of a political process in which Ali Jinnah and the Muslim League, Jawaharlal Nehru and the Congress party, and, above all, the British colonial administration and the British Government were the main players. The absurdity of the situation was not limited to the fact that those who had been neighbours living and working together only a few months earlier became enemies. On top of this, British officers were actually fighting on both sides. The incident involving Major Sloan, however, ended British active involvement. It was immediately asked that all British officers be withdrawn from the area to avoid further 'embarrassment' with Indian forces.[52] After the arrival of the UN observation unit, David Irving left Pakistan and the Army in 1950 with the rank of major, as his contract had expired. Tension between India and Pakistan remained, however.

## The recurring Kashmir conflict and the Cold War

During the war, Sheikh Abdullah was released and as he was put in charge of the Emergency Government of Jammu and Kashmir, he replaced the Maharaja as the main political leader in the state. After the cease-fire, Abdullah lost no time in taking the initiative in shaping a new Jammu and Kashmir. As allowed by the terms of accession the Constituent Assembly incorporated Article 370 in the Constitution. No such arrangement was made for any other princely state in India.

### *The special status of Jammu and Kashmir in the Indian Union*

The Instrument of Accession signed by Maharajah Hari Singh in 1947 gave the Union Government the right to exercise its power in three areas: defence, foreign affairs, and communication. Since the final decision on accession was to be made later, after the withdrawal of Indian and Pakistani troops from the area, Article 370

was added to the constitution to regulate this relationship between the Indian Union and Jammu and Kashmir.[53] However, questions about this solution were raised as soon as it was introduced. In a debate in the Constituent Assembly in 1949, the article was attacked as representing unjustified 'discrimination.'[54] The counterargument was that the unique conditions of accession demanded special treatment and that Article 370 would help to integrate the state. The right and wrong of this debate is difficult to determine for two reasons.

First, from 1953 and onwards some of the main machinery for granting autonomy, at least on paper, was dismantled as a result of the passing of various amendments. Secondly, and maybe more importantly, although the constitution has played a political role as a rallying point for different parties such as the BJS/BJP and the National Conference, it has not been so important as a provider of rules of political life. The undoubtedly 'soft' character of the central government and the various governments in Jammu and Kashmir has often weakened the principles of constitutional rule.[55] And the history of politics in Jammu and Kashmir is characterized by deviations from the spirit of the constitution rather than adherence to it.

### *United Nations attempts at negotiation between the wars*

When passing the first resolutions on the conflict, the UN made it clear that it would not intervene actively, but offered its help as an observer, mediator, and intermediary in negotiations.[56] The UNCIP plan of 1948 for a plebiscite and withdrawal of troops from the cease-fire line was, however, rejected by both sides. A series of UN representatives in India and Pakistan – the Canadian General A.G.L. MacNaughton, the Australian jurist Owen Dixon and a former United States Senator from North Carolina, Frank Graham – failed to bring the parties any closer to a solution in the late 1940s and early 1950s, despite submitting various proposals to the United Nations. In 1957 the President of the Security Council and former Ambassador of Sweden in Delhi and Karachi, Gunnar Jarring, who had visited Kashmir as a philologist in the 1930s, was assigned to the task. However, the omens were not favourable.

In the evening of 17 February, Jarring was directly approached by the American and the British representatives at the UN, Henry Cabot Lodge and Pierson Dixon, who wanted to discuss the Kashmir situation. Cabot and Dixon complained of Krishna Menon's





'obstruction' of the debates in the Security Council.[57] Krishna Menon was one of Nehru's closest advisors and had, as minister without portfolio in Nehru's government, become India's representative in the UN. In the discussion in the Security Council, Menon had filibustered for three sessions on 23 and 24 January 1957.

> The speeches could continue up to seven hours, only interrupted by the lunch break. They led to physical exhaustion. His doctor gave him injections to enable him to continue. At some point he may have been given an overdose, sometimes his speech would be slurred, he would lie stretched out in his chair with his eyes closed, suddenly he would wake up and throw papers and documents around, shout at his secretary, once he lost consciousness and had to be carried out and put on a sofa outside the Security Council. An American journalist who happened to pass by said irreverently: 'Put a microphone in front of his mouth and he will come to life again.'[58]

To Western diplomats, as is implied in the quotation above, Menon was the *enfant terrible* or, even more impolitely, the *abominable showman* (alluding to the mysterious snowman in the Himalayas, which was a popular discussion topic at the time).[59] In India, on the other hand, he was hailed as the Hero of Kashmir, and his speeches in the UN would later be compared to the oratorical skills of Demosthenes and Winston Churchill.[60] Irrespective of the quality of the speeches, I would argue that the reasons for Menon's filibuster are not difficult to find in the prevailing political situation.

The war in 1948 led the central government of India to consider Jammu and Kashmir one of its most sensitive border states, and gradually Sheikh Abdullah's independent political leadership in Jammu and Kashmir made the Congress party leaders suspicious of his loyalty to the Union. In the early 1950s, Nehru finally began to fear that Jammu and Kashmir would secede. At this time the National Conference leaders were divided over the future status of the state. Before independence, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad had been one of Sheikh Abdullah's closest allies but by the fifties the two leaders were pulling in different directions.

The ideas of modern Kashmiri nationalism are, as was mentioned earlier, traceable back to the New Kashmir manifesto presented by Abdullah in 1944. It was a nationalism expressed as distinct from Indian or Pakistani nationalism. As the leader of the interim government, Abdullah retained, to some extent, the idea that Jammu and Kashmir had a future independent from India and Pakistan.

When it became known that Abdullah had mentioned these ideas to, among others, the American ambassador in 1950 and the US Democrat leader Adlai Stevenson in the spring of 1953, the relationship with Jawaharlal Nehru and the central government deteriorated.[61] In the shadow of the Cold War, American activities were viewed with increased suspicion by the Indian Government. It seems that Mirza Afzal Beg and Sheikh Abdullah formulated plans to bring the suggestion of independence 'up for public consideration' in late August 1953 and the leakage of this fact is what prompted the arrest of Abdullah on 9 August.[62] Sheikh Abdullah continued to advocate far-reaching provisions to guarantee the autonomy of the state, sometimes containing the suggestion of independence, while Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad supported a closer integration of Jammu and Kashmir with India. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad was rewarded for his position by increased support from the central government, while Sheikh Abdullah was arrested for his 'disloyalty.'

While Abdullah was incarcerated, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad was installed as Prime Minister in the state.[63] In December 1956, however, Pakistan brought the Kashmir question to the General Assembly and in January 1957 to the Security Council. The main reason for raising the issue was that the Kashmir Constituent Assembly, under Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed (Abdullah was still in jail), was about to ratify a new constitution declaring Jammu and Kashmir an integral part of India.[64]

It is therefore likely that a part of the intention behind Menon's verbosity was to gain time and, perhaps, to block any UN resolution on Kashmir. If this was the purpose of the marathon speech, the goal was not entirely fulfilled. On 24 January 1957 a resolution was passed that the dispute should still be solved by a referendum, whatever the action of the Constituent Assembly. The UN resolution, however, would have few practical consequences, and therefore Menon was successful to some extent. On 26 January the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir came into effect, an event which had some unforeseen implications. Menon's behaviour was an early demonstration of the vigorous resistance that India would offer to UN and third-party intervention in the Kashmir question. One illustration will suffice. In February Menon approached Jarring and requested postponement of the debate on Kashmir because of the General Election that was to be held in India. Jarring replied that this was not an adequate reason for cancelling a Security Council meeting. Angrily, Menon replied 'Don't try to push the Government of India!'[65]





In spite of all this, at his meeting with Dixon and Lodge, Jarring was asked to 'solve the Kashmir problem.'[66] Well aware of the difficulty experienced by previous UN negotiators in achieving any tangible results, Jarring was surprised at the proposal. Frank Graham for example, who was the UN negotiator in 1951–53, produced several reports (although he never went to Kashmir) but made little real progress. The Americans and British had now decided to try a negotiator with what may have been perceived as a more neutral image.[67] The urgency of the question from the American point of view may have been heightened by the fear that Pakistan and India might fall under the communist domination of China and the USSR.[68] Khrushchev's visit to Srinagar in December 1955 and his support for the Indian stand in the Kashmir dispute was another headache for the Americans. The US therefore continued to give military aid to Pakistan in spite of the anti-American feelings this provoked in India.[69] But at the same time the Americans now realized that they could not simply suggest conflict resolutions without bringing in a third party such as the UN. This awareness is clearly reflected in a major report by the American Intelligence Service.

> *US pressure for Kashmir settlement.* Indian suspicions of US military intentions are likely to be heightened by strong Anglo-American pressure for a settlement in Kashmir. Having recently recognized Pakistan's currency at the non-devalued rate and concluded a major trade agreement with Pakistan, India denies the urgency of a Kashmir settlement. Hence it would view any strong American pressure to obtain the withdrawal of Indian forces from the state and a speedy settlement as an attempt to help Pakistan get Kashmir in the hope of strategically located military bases for the US which could be built up in the immediate future.[70]

Therefore, it may have been seen by the Americans and the British as an advantage for the suggestions for mediation and possible future solutions to come from a neutral representative. This time the prospects did not seem altogether hopeless. Dixon and Lodge explained that the proposal to appoint Jarring had already been accepted, not only by Pakistan's representative Firouz Khan Noon, but also by India. Jarring doubted this, but briefed the Swedish Secretary General of the UN and his personal friend Dag Hammarskjöld, who was also surprised and indeed irritated by the fact that this step had been taken by the British and Americans behind his back.[71] The pressure on Jarring to accept the assignment

was strong and finally Jarring and Hammarskjöld saw no reason to refuse the mission when both Pakistan and India formally had accepted the plan. And there were other hopeful signs. Noon was enthusiastic and speculated that Jarring might supervise the future plebiscite in Jammu and Kashmir. Also, in a private letter which later reached Jarring, Philip Noel-Baker suggested that in recent conversations Nehru had said 'he had never abandoned the idea of a plebiscite.'[72] Jarring's hopes were soon to be dashed, however.

For a month, in March and April 1957, Jarring travelled frequently between India and Pakistan. The Pakistani Government, represented by the Prime Minister Suhrawardy, was in favour of arbitration on parts of, or as a package solution of, the Kashmir conflict. It should be added, however, that the President and military commander, Iskander Mirza, was sceptical regarding any efforts to negotiate with India and regretted that Pakistan ever agreed to the cease fire in 1948.[73] Under the surface of civil rule in Pakistan, discontent was brewing in the military establishment. The Indian Government, represented by Jawaharlal Nehru and Krishna Menon,[74] demanded unequivocally that before any solutions could be found the UN had to denounce Pakistan as the aggressor in the conflict and that Pakistani forces had to withdraw from Azad Kashmir before any negotiations could begin.[75] The fact that American military aid to Pakistan during this period only reinforced this stand by the Indian Government raises questions about the motives of the United States at the time. On the one hand, the British and the Americans played a crucial role in initiating Jarring's trip to solve the Kashmir conflict. Simultaneously, however, the Americans were aiding the Pakistani military establishment, which obviously left the Indian Government with no incentive to move further towards a solution of the conflict. Either American foreign policy suffered from severe coordination problems or the Americans were simply using the UN as a diplomatic façade while pursuing the fierce cold war against the Soviet Union in South Asia.

Consequently Jarring, wearied by the strategy of 'evasive diplomacy,' could only report to the UN that the two parties were still in unreconcilable positions.[76] That was the last opportunity to solve the Kashmir conflict for a long time. About a year later, Mirza's patience with the limping democratic experiment in Pakistan ran out and martial law was declared. In the early 1960s, tension in the region increased. In 1961 Indian forces moved into Goa. In 1962, war broke out between China and India and Krishna



Menon who had assumed the post as India's Minister of Defence, was severely criticized for having underestimated the threat from the east.[77] In the same year the Kashmir question was brought to the Security Council, and again without any concrete results. Within two years tension between India and Pakistan increased to the point where UN intervention was impossible. The part played by the UN is well summarized by Lamb.

> It may fairly be said that in the space of some seventeen years the United Nations made absolutely no progress at all in its quest for a final solution for the Kashmir problem. It had played an important part in the securing of a cease-fire and the demarcation of a cease-fire line. Its corps of observers from 1949 to the beginning of 1965, moreover, helped in ensuring that incidents along the cease-fire line did not escalate into a fresh outbreak of full scale war. Once the cease-fire had been achieved, however, there was really little more that the United Nations could do[.][78]

But the failure, it should be remembered, can only be fully understood in the context of the Cold War. In relation to the forces of the competing USSR, China and USA, the UN carried little weight. In 1964 India and Pakistan began to drift towards a new war. The prelude was the Hazratbal crisis, also known as the theft of the Prophet's Hair.

### *Relapse into war*

According to legend the journey of the relic, the Mo-e-Muqaddas or the Prophet's Hair, began from Medina early in the 17th century. Under the protection of the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb and, the legend says, the divine guidance of Allah, the hair was brought to Kashmir in the year 1700. It was placed in a building by the Dal Lake and became known as Asar-e-Sharif (the Shrine of the Relic) and later as Hazratbal (the lake of the Hazrat, or the Prophet).[79] It was at this place that Sheikh Abdullah held many of his most popular speeches before and after independence. For this and other reasons this most treasured relic had become increasingly associated with the Kashmiri identity. One day in December 1963, while Abdullah was still in jail, the relic disappeared and the eyes of the outraged population in the Valley all turned towards Bakshi and his supporters.

As was mentioned earlier, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed became the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir after Sheikh Abdullah

was thrown in jail in 1953. The National Conference became in effect a Pradesh Congress Committee.[80] Sheikh Abdullah, although in jail, and his followers transferred their support to the Plebiscite Front led by Beg. Bakshi's strategy was to go along with the central government and not to question the integration of Jammu and Kashmir with India, at least as long as this policy was rewarded in terms of financial support.

> Bakshi was a competent administrator and made full use of the flow of financial assistance from the Centre. Hydroelectric projects, housing colonies, roads spreading through the valley (though some paid from the State exchequer were later found to exist only on paper), facilities for tourists, a lower-level tunnel at Banihal to improve communications with Jammu and the rest of India, all appeared. Rice was subsidised. The purpose was to demonstrate the benefits of closer ties with India. But the impact on the public was mixed. Mir Qasim, then a Cabinet Minister, recalls: 'The people were happy with our work, but would not forgive us for the plight of the Sheikh and therefore would not fully cooperate in our development projects.'[81]

And discontent continued to grow as allegations of corruption in the Bakshi administration became more frequent. The State Assembly election in 1962 further stoked up disaffection.[82]

> The elections in 1962 were so thoroughly rigged that Bakshi's hand-chosen National Conference candidates won seventy out of seventy-five seats. Nehru was prompted to tell him: 'In fact, it would strengthen your position much more if you lost a few seats to bonafide opponents.'[83]

Although Bakshi Ghulam Muhammed had resigned in October because of the Kamaraj plan,[84] accusing fingers were pointed at his family when the holy relic disappeared. A rumour had spread saying that the Mo-e-Muqaddas had been stolen to soothe Bakshi's ailing mother.[85] The police investigation that finally led to the recovery of the relic never revealed who stole it. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, however, left Kashmir on the morning of 4 January – the same day that the relic was returned.

When the crisis was over Nehru ordered the release of Sheikh Abdullah, and for a while it looked as though the Kashmir question had a chance of being solved. After discussions with Nehru, Abdullah travelled to Pakistan and managed to get the approval of





President Ayub Khan for a summit including the leaders of Pakistan and India. Fate intervened, however, and on 27 May 1964, Jawaharlal Nehru passed away in his sleep. Momentum was lost with him, and the short meeting that was finally held between President Ayub Khan and the new Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri in October 1964 led nowhere.

Many Kashmiris felt that the political situation inside Jammu and Kashmir allowed them no self-respect. With the collapse of what was left of the National Conference, a new section of the Congress party in Jammu and Kashmir, under the leadership of Mir Qasim, was founded in 1965. Political opposition to the centre was now crystallizing into two groups; the supporters of Sheikh Abdullah and Mirza Afzal Beg among whom Farooq Abdullah, Sheikh Abdullah's son, had become politically prominent during the Hazratbal crisis; and the Awami Action Committee, led by a young priest-leader, or *Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir*, Maulvi Muhammed Farooq, which contained advocates of the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to Pakistan.[86] But after a Haj trip, Abdullah was again arrested with Beg and detained for three years. During this period the constitution of Jammu and Kashmir was even more closely integrated with the Indian Union. Reforms proclaimed by Ghulam Mohammed Bakshi and continued by the Indian Government, in particular during the period 1963 to 1965, diminished the constitutional separateness of Jammu and Kashmir. For example, in Jammu and Kashmir the Head of the State, known by the traditional title of Sadar-e-Riyasat, was elected by the State Assembly,[87] but after 1965 the title changed to Governor and the post was appointed by the President of India in the same way as in other Indian States. Also, the Governor was given the power to 'assume to himself all or any of the functions of the Government of the State' in 'case of failure of the constitutional machinery in the State.'[88] Such actions required the consent of the President, and this meant in practice that the central government strengthened its grip on Jammu and Kashmir. From the Pakistani perspective, these actions may have been interpreted as signs that the Indian Government was about to 'annex' the state.[89] In January 1965 tension was high between India and Pakistan and soon led to the border clashes that eventually escalated into a large scale conflict. But what is usually called the War of 1965, actually consisted of two different confrontations.

Although it is not entirely clear what precipitated the clash between Indian and Pakistani troops in the Rann of Kutch early in

1965, the crisis died down and fighting stopped, for a while, after mediation by the British which even led to a signed agreement by both parties. Nonetheless, tension increased along the Punjab border and the cease-fire line during the summer. The Pakistani forces, backed by the Government, began to infiltrate Jammu and Kashmir, possibly as early as 1964, in what was to become known as Operation Gibraltar.[90] Fighting increased, and by September both sides were launching attacks. The commanders of the Pakistani attack on Kashmir in August may well have counted on substantial backing from anti-Indian forces, supposedly aroused by the Hazratbal crisis, within Jammu and Kashmir. Such support, however, did not materialize. After heavy fighting and political pressure from China, United States and Britain, the cease-fire proposed by the UN was accepted by India and Pakistan in September and in January 1966 both countries met in Tashkent and agreed to establish peaceful relations.[91]

Nevertheless, the Cold War continued to influence the situation. Tension remained and differences on the interpretation of the Tashkent agreement were voiced. India and Pakistan, also had to pay attention to distressing domestic problems, yet both countries immediately began to spend money on rearmament, in spite of their poor economies. A situation of near-famine had developed in India after two bad monsoons, industrial growth had declined, and Nehru's daughter and India's new Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, faced the internal rivalries that eventually led to the splitting of the Congress party in 1969. There was also rivalry among the leadership in Pakistan and in 1968 an attempt was made on Ayub Khan's life. Soon after that, power was taken over by General Yahya Khan, who immediately had to face growing discontent in East Pakistan.

Dissatisfaction also prevailed in Jammu and Kashmir. Although the 1967 election may have been somewhat more democratic than the previous one, the most important opposition leaders, such as Sheikh Abdullah and the Mirwaiz Farooq, were still in jail.[92] The situation changed somewhat in 1968 when Sheikh Abdullah was released. In October, a large group of Kashmiri politicians gathered at a State People's Convention, including Mirwaiz Farooq, who advocated accession to Pakistan. Sheikh Abdullah, leading the Plebiscite Front with Beg, still at least included the independence option in his speeches but he, too, criticized the Indian Government in the second Convention, held in 1970.[93] The Government responded by barring Sheikh Abdullah from entering Jammu and Kashmir and banning the Plebiscite Front before the general election,





but these events were soon overshadowed by the war which saw the birth of Bangladesh.

The uprising in East Pakistan had its roots in poor relations between East and West Pakistan going back at least to the 1950s, and finally natural disaster and politics triggered violence.[94] After East Pakistan was hit by a cyclone in November 1970, West Pakistan was criticized for giving too little aid. The leaders of East Pakistan had long complained that they were not taken seriously by the elite in West Pakistan. After civilian rule was reintroduced, elections were held in December 1970. In East Pakistan Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the Awami League won 160 out of 162 seats, while Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and the Pakistan's People's Party only won 81 out of 138 seats. Nevertheless, Rahman was not invited to form the new government. But another event, connected with Jammu and Kashmir, played a big part in bringing India into the crisis. This was the hijacking of the Indian civilian airliner 'Ganga' on 30 January 1971, by two young Kashmiris who forced the flight to land at Lahore Airport and, in the name of the Kashmir National Liberation Front, demanded the release of alleged members imprisoned in India. The passengers were released but the aircraft was destroyed in a fire started by the hijackers. The Government of India berated the Pakistani government, claiming it had connived with the hijackers. India then banned all flights of Pakistani airliners over India, thus cutting off the lifeline and support route between East and West Pakistan. In April the Pakistan Commission of Inquiry delivered its report on the hijacking incident, which it claimed had been staged by Indian Intelligence to provide an official excuse to cut off communications as a part of a larger effort to support the separatist movement in East Pakistan. Who was behind the event remains to be proved, but there is no doubt that this episode marks the start of a rapid decline in relations between India and Pakistan.[95] The troops sent from West Pakistan to East Pakistan now had to be flown via Colombo and the whole situation 'injected an element of hysteria into the conduct of its commanders.'[96] The troops were ordered to fight the separatist forces but only managed to provoke stronger feelings of resentment and alienation. Indira Gandhi referred to the high number of refugees moving from East Pakistan into India in justification of the decision to intervene directly, and on 3 December 1971 Yahya Khan decided on full-scale retaliation against India. The war lasted for only fourteen days but fighting was intense and Pakistan lost not only in East Pakistan. Hostilities broke out along

the Punjab border and the cease-fire line and were not stopped until 17 December 1971. Bangladesh was born, and in July the following year the leaders of India and Pakistan, Indira Gandhi and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who had now replaced Yahya Khan, agreed to meet at Simla.

## Democracy is coming

The agreement signed at Simla stipulated that the countries should solve their conflicts by peaceful means and bilateral negotiation, and that the old cease-fire line was to become the line of control (LOC) and, in other words, the *de facto* border between India and Pakistan. The accord provided no specific solutions to the Kashmir problem.[97] From this point onwards, however, the political climate in Jammu and Kashmir began to change, especially as far as the relationship between the opposition in Jammu and Kashmir and the central government was concerned.

The Plebiscite Front was still not trusted enough to be allowed to compete in the State Assembly election in 1972, although, ironically, the Jamaat-e-Islami, which was to become the leading separatist organization in the late 1980s and 1990s, was allowed to contest it and did so with some success, winning five seats. Furthermore, it has been claimed that Mir Qasim, who took over after the death of Sadiq, started to recruit more civil servants from other parts of India and less from the Kashmiris, Dogras and Punjabis. In spite of this, the Centre and the parts of the political establishment in Jammu and Kashmir began to move closer together.

As the President of the Plebiscite Front, Beg announced as early as February 1972 that the demand for a plebiscite was no longer considered a feasible option. Sheikh Abdullah continued to argue along the same lines when, at a public meeting at Hazratbal in June, he explained that he had given up hope of obtaining support for the independence alternative from Pakistan, and that he saw the future of Kashmir as an autonomous region within the Indian Union.[98] No doubt the rejection of Pakistan and independence as political alternatives took place in the light of the situation created by the war of 1971. Indira Gandhi welcomed the shift in position by the Plebiscite Front as much as it was resented in Azad Kashmir. Talks were initiated and finally, after negotiations between Beg and the diplomat G. Parthasarathy, an agreement was signed on 13 November 1974. Although Abdullah's demand for fresh elections was not met, it was agreed that Article 370 was to be retained. The





accord was agreed in February 1975 and was followed by an important change announced on 25 February. Abdullah replaced Qasim as the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir. This was hard for several sections of the political community in the state to digest. Abdullah was said to be associating himself too closely with the Centre and it was feared he would become just another puppet like Bakshi. Nevertheless, the Plebiscite Front changed its name to the National Conference, and according to Ajit Bhattacharjea Abdullah began to distance himself from the Centre when he rejected Central subsidies for rice.[99] And afterwards, during the Emergency which was declared in 1975, Abdullah continued to show his independence by refusing 'to go along and condemn his old friend, Jayaprakash Narayan.'[100] Narayan was one of the political leaders in India who had openly challenged the authoritarian tendencies of Indira Gandhi's government. Although the Emergency ended in 1977, support for the Congress party was declining, and later the same year, the National Conference was ready to fight for representation in the State Assembly in its own right in the most democratic elections ever held in the state. The National Conference and the Congress party were to meet, head on, as political equals. After a long detour, Jammu and Kashmir was finally on course for democracy.

# 4

# THE RISE AND FALL OF DEMOCRACY IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR 1977–1989

Considering the traumatic events during partition and the unfinished settlement from the time of accession,[1] it is quite understandable that many authors who try to explain the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir emphasize the historical roots. But the historical legacy does not consist only of accession, the antagonism between India and Pakistan, the powerlessness of the UN during the Cold War and the failure of attempts to negotiate in the conflict. The inherent weaknesses in the institutional democratic structure should be kept in mind if we want to understand the fragility of the democracy that was introduced in 1977. No other state in India had to wait so long for democracy as Jammu and Kashmir.[2] The poor record of democracy in Jammu and Kashmir is characterized by the constant rigging of elections and by various forms of central government intervention which prevented the development of fair and autonomous political competition between political parties.

While elections were held in most parts of the country from 1952 onwards, the first Vidhan Sabha election (election to the legislative assembly in the state) was held only in 1962 and the first Lok Sabha (national assembly) election did not take place until 1967. Most elections held in Jammu and Kashmir before the mid-1970s are generally considered to have been fraudulent in various ways. In 1951, in the Constituent Assembly election, the National Conference candidates won all the seventy-five seats. The journalist and Congress (I) politician M.J. Akbar points out that the results were most likely accepted only because of the undoubtedly widespread support for Sheikh Abdullah.[3] But it should not be forgotten that the Praja Parishad Party, an opposition party dominated by landowning Hindus in Jammu, had no choice but to accept the illegal rejection of their candidates.





As we saw in the last chapter, equally corrupt electoral practices were to plague the state for the next twenty-five years, although they were employed mainly by the central government under Congress party rule. Nonetheless, democracy got off to a start in 1977 which, considering the troubled background, showed some promise of survival and consolidation.

## The democratic breakthrough of 1977

Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Abdullah are often given the credit for bringing the first free and fair Legislative Assembly election to Jammu and Kashmir in 1977.[4] Indeed, M.J. Akbar argues that they set the state on course for democracy as early as 1975. A different picture is, however, painted by the former National Conference member Balraj Puri, by Bhim Singh of the local Panthers Party in Jammu and Kashmir, and by others who emphasize the role of Morarji Desai, who was Prime Minister when elections were held in the summer of 1977.[5] Trying to find a base for support in the north after its electoral defeat in the Lok Sabha election in March 1977, the Congress (I) was planning a bigger effort to capture votes in Jammu and Kashmir. Desai, however, took important steps to strengthen security in Jammu and Kashmir so that the summer elections would be fair. According to Bhim Singh, 'Morarji Desai openly declared that anyone who would attempt to pursue some form of rigging would be severely punished, and this was quite effective.'[6] The Congress party became the third largest in the Assembly, with 11 seats. The Janata Party won 13 seats, and the National Conference secured a majority with 47 out of the total of 75 seats in the Assembly. The Jamaat-e-Islami, which may be described as a non-secular Islamist, or ethnic, party, won only one seat, four less than in 1972.[7] The Maulana Abbas Ansari, a Shia leader and an influential political figure in Jammu and Kashmir, and his supporters (who have cooperated politically with the Jamaat-e-Islami)[8] are among the few who still claim that the elections of 1977 were not fair.[9]

It seems that for democracy to reach Jammu and Kashmir, the Indian National Congress had to be removed from power at the Centre first. From Jawaharlal Nehru's and Indira Gandhi's perspective, the sensitive border state was simply not considered as ready for democracy. Building Indian nationalism and expanding democracy at the same time were often considered, it seems, incompatible goals, and in particular it seems that this view was applied

to Jammu and Kashmir. An autonomous political opposition was seen as a hindrance to integration and development, and in the view of the Congress party nation-building had to be given priority over democratization.[10] Nevertheless, Balraj Puri, who has extensive experience of Kashmir politics and has provided some of the most valuable analyses of the conflict, suggests that this argument can be refuted. Far from being an obstacle to the process of nation-building, democracy may, against the background of what happened in Jammu and Kashmir between the mid-1970s and the mid-1980s, be regarded as a prerequisite for integration and national unity. Puri emphatically points out that with free and fair elections a natural process of integration of Jammu and Kashmir with India had been initiated.[11] Although democracy can be seen as an obstacle to integration, Puri's analysis clearly supports the claim, made for example by Robert Dahl, that it can be regarded as a vital component in the nation-building process.[12] One of the consequences of the democratization process during the mid-1970s was that 'there was ten years in Jammu and Kashmir with no fundamentalism, no secessionism and no communalism.' Of course Puri does not mean that Jammu and Kashmir was without problems during this period. The point is that at least the situation was manageable and that democracy, for a time, worked. The level of violence and turbulence in the early 1980s was insignificant compared with that of today[13] and it would seem that the political conditions did breed integration. Further evidence of this comes from what may be considered an unexpected source – namely from Amanullah Khan, the leader of the separatist Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF).

The political positions on the future status of Jammu and Kashmir are that the Jamaat-e-Islami advocates accession to Pakistan, while the Bharatiya Janata Party argues that Jammu and Kashmir should lose its special status in the constitution and be totally integrated with the Indian Union and the Ram Rajya. The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) has taken 'the third position' in this conflict, advocating that Jammu and Kashmir should become an independent state. The JKLF was created in the mid-1960s by Amanullah Khan and Maqbool Butt. It first operated as the Plebiscite Front, but it changed its name later to the Kashmir National Liberation Front and finally to the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front.[14] The JKLF did not become a significant political factor in the Valley until the mid- and late-1980s, but it had been active behind the scenes for a long time. As early as 1969





newspapers mentioned the names of Maqbool Butt and Amanullah Khan in connection with the 'Ganga' incident.[15] Butt attracted further media attention when he was arrested in 1976 for crimes committed in India in the 1960s. Shortly after the arrest of Butt, Khan moved to England where he established the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front office in Luton. In 1984, five members of the organization were questioned about the Birmingham kidnapping and assassination of the Indian diplomat Ravindra Mahtre. According to the *Tribune*, the JKLF carried out the kidnapping to 'secure the release' of Maqbool Butt, who, was awaiting execution in India.[16] Two years later, after the execution of Maqbool Butt, Amanullah Khan was deported to Pakistan after being acquitted of charges of storing chemicals for explosives at the JKLF-office (which was also Khan's home at the time). Nevertheless, it was not until 1988 that the JKLF began to organize an effective separatist campaign in the Valley, and the interesting question is: Why not earlier?

Khan's position on the status of Jammu and Kashmir did not change so much over the years. He had always demanded autonomy since he began his organized activities in Karachi in the early 1960s. Could Khan have launched the offensive in the Valley any earlier than he did? Khan's own comments on this question shed some light on the process of integration and the political climate in Jammu and Kashmir at that period. The JKLF leadership was well aware of the need for local support before the organization could hope to become better established in the Valley – 'there had to be some fertile soil.' Therefore, Khan explains, 'some boys were sent from England to IOK to survey if the sentiments could be used for armed struggle.'[17] This was in 1983 and clearly conditions were not found favourable for launching a militant campaign.

> They returned and gave me the answer that there was no chance of starting a movement at this time. Everybody in the area was busy. Some were dreaming of the accession to Pakistan, but most people were busy getting on with their daily lives and businesses.[18]

Amanullah Khan's observations clearly indicate that when democracy was functioning in Jammu and Kashmir, the demand to change the political status of the state was no longer loudly heard, nor widely supported. They also lend credibility to Puri's view that a democracy that functioned fairly well led to greater integration. Most sources and persons interviewed in this study agree that

Jammu and Kashmir was a quite peaceful state during the period 1977–1983.[19] For example, the veteran Jammu and Kashmir politician Bhim Singh of the Panthers Party explains that in the early 1980s 'all the politicians' minds were set on fighting politically within the framework of democracy.'[20]

At this time it would not have been possible to predict political behaviour purely on the basis of religious belief. In the late 1970s, for example, it seems that political 'understandings' and a certain amount of collaboration developed between the National Conference and a faction of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).[21] In 1981–82, the National Conference supported the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the Jammu Municipality.[22] In other words, political parties traditionally thought to draw most of their support from the Hindu population cooperated with a party mainly seen as relying on a Muslim vote bank. This is at sharp variance with the behaviour of ethnic party systems described by Horowitz. Instead of being rendered impossible by centrifugal forces, cooperation across ethnic lines evidently occurred. Moreover, from the sources used in this study, it seems that the political arguments in the mainstream debate of the early 1980s were not primarily based on religion.[23] This allows us to interpret the political climate as quite secular. Secular politics, it seems, managed to coexist with integration and a functioning democracy. The interpretation that democracy contributed to integration can naturally be discussed further.

For example, Abdul Ghani Lone, another political key player in today's separatist movement, can provide some counterarguments. Lone originally pursued his political career with the Congress party, but in 1978 he founded his own party – the People's Conference, and today he is a senior member of the Hurriyat Conference.[24] Lone points out that even if several parties in Jammu and Kashmir contested democratic elections, this does not imply that those parties accepted the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India. 'The Indian National Congress and National Conference contested in politics before independence, but that does not mean they accepted British Rule.'[25] Lone makes an important point here and shows that the fact that democracy is working may not necessarily eliminate separatist demands; but on the other hand it remains apparent that separatist voices did not receive much support when democracy was working during the late 1970s and the early 1980s.

Against this background it is possible to draw some of our first conclusions from the observations on democracy, violence and





separatism in Jammu and Kashmir. To begin with, there was evidently something akin to ethnic peace in Jammu and Kashmir in the late 1970s and early 1980s, in spite of the state's history of disputed status and the mix of different language and religious groups. Developments and popular sentiments in the area during this period show that democracy was at least possible and valued. Democracy in Jammu and Kashmir seems also to have aided integration and the nation-building process in India. Forces disloyal to the nation-state project may always be present in a functioning democracy, but the available evidence suggests that they attracted little support and that the level of violence can remain low as long as political freedoms remain intact and institutions are fairly stable. Nor is there any evidence in the events described above that the mix of religious identities *per se* created the conflict that escalated in the late 1980s. Although political parties were ethnic according to Horowitz' definition, they did not automatically begin to polarize according to religious allegiance. Instead, they even managed to cooperate. The religious polarization came later. So, what went wrong? Why the early demise of democracy in Jammu and Kashmir?

## The decline of democracy in Jammu and Kashmir 1983–1989

Sheikh Abdullah's fight for democratic rights was not always reflected in the internal structure and political development within the National Conference. When Sheikh Abdullah passed away in 1982,[26] he left a dual legacy to his son Farooq Abdullah who was taking over the party leadership. On the positive side, he left a state where religion and the status of the region had not yet become the only or the primary dimension of polarization. Sentiments in Jammu and Kashmir favoured peaceful democratic development. On the other hand, institutional structures in the state were weak and this made the newly introduced democracy in Jammu and Kashmir vulnerable.

Even if economic development was relatively rapid in Jammu and Kashmir in the 1970s and until the mid-1980s, this seems to have been in spite of, rather than because of, the state government.[27] Paradoxically, as state funds were growing and as the central government increased its financial support for Jammu and Kashmir, the state debt burden increased and development projects were accused of being inefficient.[28] This culminated in accusations of financial irresponsibility against Sheikh Abdullah and his

administration, and it was alleged that he had exploited the situation to increase the wealth of his own family.[29] To cut a long story short, Farooq Abdullah took over a state apparatus that can be characterized as quite large but unfortunately thoroughly soft. The administration saw its function as serving patron-client relationships rather than as carrying out development projects.

Furthermore, Farooq Abdullah inherited a popular but internally fractured party from his father in 1982. The leadership role came to him in less than ideal circumstances. Some of the trouble had started back in 1978, when Mirza Afzal Beg was expelled from the National Conference after more than forty years of friendship and political struggle at Sheikh Abdullah's side. Sheikh Abdullah seems to have followed the same political strategy as Indira Gandhi, allowing the tendencies inherent in dynastic rule to assert themselves instead of building an internally democratic political apparatus firmly anchored in local organizations. Distrusting Beg, Sheikh Abdullah rejected him and began to look for a successor. The choice was between his son, Farooq Abdullah, whom he considered too young and inexperienced, and his daughter's husband, Ghulam Mohammed Shah, whom he thought too arrogant and far too eager to take over the party leadership.[30] Shah was shocked by Sheikh Abdullah's decision to let Farooq Abdullah succeed him, and later he was further provoked by Farooq Abdullah's decision to remove Ghulam Mohiuddin Shah, Ghulam Mohammed Shah's nephew, from the post of party General Secretary.[31] Consequently, after the death of Sheikh Abdullah, the National Conference was torn by internal rivalry, at the same time as it was under constant attack from outside forces.

As well as having to watch the internal threat from Shah, Farooq Abdullah was facing a Congress party which had decided to recapture Jammu and Kashmir at almost any cost in its determination to regain what it had lost in the 1977 election. As the new leader of the National Conference, Farooq Abdullah was quite receptive to the idea of cooperating with the Congress (I),[32] although some tension had developed during discussions on the Resettlement Bill initiated by Sheikh Abdullah before his death.[33] The Resettlement Bill gave those who had emigrated from Jammu and Kashmir to Pakistan, but were subjects of the state before May 1954, the right to return. Eventually it helped to create a rift between the two parties. The National Conference was accused by Congress (I) of aiming only at increasing its vote bank through the Bill, and the Congress (I) was accused by the National Conference of withholding





the constitutional rights of former citizens of the state. Not altogether surprisingly, the negotiations on an electoral alliance broke down in April 1983. But there was also a seat-equation that could not be worked out between the two parties. Congress (I) demanded between 15 and 23 of the total of 75 seats in the state, which was too much for Farooq Abdullah.[34] He explains in *My Dismissal* that the alliance was avoided because of the fear that the National Conference could be marginalized.[35] Shortly after the negotiations had broken down, both parties declared they were contesting all seats in the state separately.

Campaigning was fierce and the Congress (I) took a firm stand against the Resettlement Bill. Although we can find some early signs of communal politics in this election, it should be pointed out that the main political issues were still formulated on secular lines.[36] Political argumentation made little reference to religious rights. Indeed, both the BJP and the Jamaat-e-Islami, the parties respectively defining themselves as Hindu and Muslim, were wiped out in the election. This time the Congress (I) and the National Conference competed on a more equal basis. The Congress (I) formed the main opposition to the National Conference and it finally received 26 seats, while the National Conference won 46 of the total of 75. Only three seats went to independent candidates, indicating strong but, nevertheless, relatively secular political polarization.[37]

Campaigning, however, was violent and the elections were plagued by an increased level of fraud. So, if polarization between communities did increase during this period, it seems that the root cause was the ambition of the political elite to win elections and power by the capture of certain vote banks by any means available. Certainly they did not seem to be able to rely on well organized and stable party structures to achieve these aims. The Congress (I) office was set on fire in May, and the National Conference was accused of planning to rig the election a month before the polls.[38] Almost 70 percent of the electorate participated, but polling had to be suspended at several stations, and repolling was immediately ordered by the Chief Electoral Officer in two of them. Admittedly this shows that at least some watchdog institutions were at work in the election and perhaps they had some effect in preventing greater abuse. After the election, there was an inquiry into the polling in the Doda constituency, the Congress (I) demanded a new poll in 18 constituencies, and the Congress (I) and the People's Conference joined in protesting against the NC's manipulation of the electoral process. But in spite of all the tumult, the electoral victory of

Farooq Abdullah and the National Conference was finally, to a large extent, accepted by the political opposition and the media. Or, as one paper put it, 'Yet, when everything is said, the popular mandate is beyond doubt. Sheikh Abdullah's mantle has truly fallen on his son who owes no thanks to any favours from any quarter.'[39] Democratic credibility had, however, begun to be undermined by electoral malpractice and institutional decline. The events in the following years would only accelerate the process.

### *The fatal dismissal*

The blow that put a definite halt to the consolidation of democracy and the integration of Jammu and Kashmir came on 2 July 1984, when Farooq was told by the new Governor, Jagmohan, that his party had lost its majority in the state Assembly through the defection of thirteen Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), twelve belonging to the National Conference and one independent.[40] The group quickly proposed to form a new government with outside support from the Congress (I). This caused an angry reaction and was criticised as unconstitutional and undemocratic. Jagmohan had asked Farooq Abdullah to step down without letting him test his support on the floor of the Assembly and the central government was accused of having plotted the dismissal. It seems that during Indira Gandhi's leadership the Congress (I) was willing to strike against any opposition leader in almost any state, whether or not they had been democratically elected. Disillusionment with democratic institutions and contempt for the central government increased dramatically in Jammu and Kashmir after the dismissal of Farooq Abdullah and the political developments that followed. Therefore it is important to investigate how and why this happened. Even if the road to democracy was bumpy and the bureaucracy and the parties were plagued by corruption, democracy in Jammu and Kashmir was being consolidated until this fatal change of direction took place. Why did Farooq Abdullah have to be dismissed at such cost to the political development of Jammu and Kashmir?

The former Jammu and Kashmir Governor Jagmohan claims that he acted in the national interest and that he had to take action against Abdullah who, he alleges, was not taking a firm stand against pressure from terrorists in Punjab and Pakistan.[41] He adds that Farooq Abdullah had lost his support in the Assembly with the defection of the MLAs to Congress (I). Jagmohan therefore





concludes that he only did what was expected of him in the summer of 1984.

The course of events was as follows. Late on the evening[42] of 1 July, Jagmohan was informed that a group of MLAs in the National Conference, led by Ghulam Mohammed Shah, Farooq Abdullah's brother-in-law, and Devi Das Thakur, the High Court Lawyer and former Finance Minister in the state, planned to withdraw support from Farooq Abdullah and form a new government with the backing of Congress (I).[43] With Thakur's assistance, Shah was about to take over the highest office in the state. The following morning Jagmohan delivered the news to Farooq Abdullah. But rather than support Shah's defectors, Jagmohan suggested to Farooq Abdullah that since the National Conference had lost its majority, Jagmohan could impose Governor's Rule.[44] Farooq returned home and, after meeting his Cabinet, replied by letter that 'democratic traditions require that the question of loss of confidence should always be tested on the floor of the House' and that Jagmohan should therefore summon the Legislature for this purpose. Jagmohan claims that 'the surcharged atmosphere' did not allow the Assembly to convene and that he was disappointed by Farooq Abdullah's failure to accept the option of Governor's Rule. Nevertheless, when Jagmohan contacted Indira Gandhi at 11:00 a.m. on 2 July, she gave her blessing to the Governor's Rule suggestion. Shah and Thakur, naturally, were not happy to hear this. But then, according to Arun Nehru, a relative to the Nehru/Gandhi family who was working closely with Rajiv Gandhi and Indira Gandhi at the time, the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Political Affairs overruled the option and said 'let there be a split in the National Conference – Shah will not last a year.'[45] At 3:00 p.m. the Cabinet Sub- Committee's decision was communicated to Jagmohan, who argues the he therefore had no course but to swear in Shah. The criticism levelled against Jagmohan is that he should have allowed Farooq Abdullah to test his support on the floor instead of unquestioningly carrying out the orders of the central government. In his defence, Jagmohan argues that this charge is baseless in that, when arguing for Governor's Rule, he was in fact opposing the central government, which advocated that Shah should be installed.[46] But there is a good deal to be said in response to Jagmohan's defence against his critics.

To begin with, the central government, and in particular Indira Gandhi, had obviously decided that Farooq Abdullah had to be removed from power. Since both the options considered by Jagmohan (imposing Governor's Rule or putting Shah in charge)

included this objective, it may still be argued that he was going along with the central government, and not opposing it. Important evidence of this declared intention is found in several places. By the spring of 1984 it was common knowledge that Indira Gandhi wanted to remove Farooq Abdullah from office, but the following information shows that a scheme to do this was hatched only a few months after the 1983 election. We should first consider this newspaper report from September on political developments in Jammu and Kashmir, which revealed that an alliance had been made that took everyone by surprise.

> These developments were preceded by what seemed like the re-emergence of Mr G.M. Shah, the Chief Minister's brother in law, in the political field after a long silence which appeared to suggest retirement from the power game. /.../ It is now clear that Mr Shah's silence over a period of some three months was a strain which he could not bear endlessly. He has decided to join hands with a former political enemy, Mr D.D. Thakur, in what looks like an attempt to destabilize the Government and to overthrow Farooq Abdullah. The attitude of Mr Thakur will not surprise many. Although he was close to Sheikh Abdullah and supported Farooq Abdullah for the leadership of the party, he was known for some time to be drifting away from the latter.[47]

The report suggests that the conflict that was resolved between Shah and Thakur was mainly an affair at state level motivated by the wish to overthrow a common political enemy. There are indications, however, that the scheme originated in higher spheres, namely in the central government and the Prime Minister's office. With surprising frankness, Thakur explains what happened behind the scenes and how Indira Gandhi called him in to discuss the removal of Farooq Abdullah from power immediately after the election.

> She said 'how do you go about Kashmir', and then I said that 'this is one of the ways which we can do.' '[Indira Gandhi said] can you do it?' I said 'yes I am capable of doing it.' '[Indira Gandhi said] but who is the horse that it is it that you are going to flog then?' I said 'G.M. Shah.' '[Indira Gandhi said] but you are not pulling on well with him, how do you do it?' I said 'I'll surrender, I'll win him over' /.../ And then I went to Kashmir. Then I had a meeting with G.M. Shah at my son in-law's house, where he came for the dinner. /.../ And we planned the entire thing, and I came back and reported to her that this is the line of acting.[48]





After this meeting, Farooq Abdullah was under constant attack from two fronts. Shah and Thakur were set on splitting the party from within. By the spring of 1984 this had gone so far that Shah and Farooq Abdullah were holding separate party conventions.[49] This split also prepared the way for the defection later in the summer. The so-called floor-crossing could have been considered illegal under the constitutional law of Jammu and Kashmir State.[50] Since the party had held two separate conventions, however, the High Court later ruled the defection of the twelve MLAs legal, since the party was considered to have split. This outcome was most certainly anticipated by D.D. Thakur, an experienced lawyer and now the supporter of Shah.

From the outside the pressure came from the central government which accused Farooq Abdullah of being lenient with and even giving encouragement to separatists from Pakistan and Punjab. On 13 October 1983, during the cricket match between the West Indies and India, members of the Jamaat-e-Tulba, the youth wing of Jamaat-e-Islami, waved the flags of the organization and threw rubbish onto the outfield. The central government openly declared its concern that Farooq Abdullah was losing control of the state, and according to the historian Alastair Lamb, this event:

> was more than a clash of parties on a specific occasion or over a specific issue. There was being injected into the Vale of Kashmir what can only be described as the first phase of a general Islamic rebellion against the Hindu Domination of New Delhi.[51]

It may, however, be debated whether the cricket match incident should be interpreted as the something as significant as the beginning of a general rebellion. It should be pointed out that both the Kashmir Liberation Front and the Jamaat-e-Islami had threatened violence when the first international cricket match in Kashmir was to be played in 1978. Things were a bit different then, Abdullah recalls.

> I was the Chairman of the J&K Cricket Association at the time, and with the backing of the State Government, we had to seek the intervention of the president of India, Shri Sanjiva Reddy, and the match was played without any incident.[52]

Consequently, bringing the international cricket match to the disputed territory was always a provocation to the Jamaat-e-Islami. It was a provocation in 1978 and also in 1983 simply because the party had always criticized the accession. Caution is therefore

advisable in drawing far reaching conclusions about the political climate in general in Jammu and Kashmir, such as those drawn by Lamb and the central government in 1984, from the cricket-match incident alone. It is more important to point out another difference that may explain the strong reactions of the central government in 1984. In 1978 Sheikh Abdullah was at peace with the central government, and in 1983 Farooq Abdullah was not. After the incident in 1983 Indira Gandhi expressed her serious concern over developments in Jammu and Kashmir and the fact that Farooq Abdullah was not taking necessary and stern measures against the 'insurgents.'[53] More criticism, implicit or explicit, of Farooq Abdullah followed.

In January 1984 Indira Gandhi warned that she would not accept any anti-national activities in Jammu and Kashmir. A month after that, Rajiv Gandhi publicly predicted an invasion of Jammu and Kashmir by Pakistan, and a few weeks later Congress (I) members claimed that Farooq Abdullah was a member of the JKLF.[54] But events and evidence did not confirm these criticisms and charges. Farooq Abdullah could be accused of political incompetence and corruption, but no proof was ever presented that he was a JKLF member and Pakistan did not invade Jammu and Kashmir as repeatedly prophesied by Rajiv Gandhi. The message from the central government was, however, quite clear. Farooq Abdullah was officially portrayed by the Congress (I) as a threat to national security who ought therefore to be ousted. Now, there was only one obstacle. B.K. Nehru, another relative of Indira Gandhi, was the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, and he was not willing to accede to the plans of the central government.

According to B.K. Nehru, the central government tried to persuade him to remove Farooq Abdullah 'every day.'[55] B.K. Nehru, however, did not welcome the attempts of the central government to intervene because he did not accept the truth of the accusations. It should also be mentioned that Farooq Abdullah and B.K. Nehru were good friends. When Farooq Abdullah was uneasy about the recommendations of his personal advisor, P.L. Handoo, he used to meet B.K. Nehru, sometimes over a drink, and discuss his problems with him. However, this friendly relationship did not stop Farooq Abdullah from putting B.K. Nehru in a difficult position. At the time when Farooq Abdullah was being most severely criticized by the central government on the law-and-order situation in Jammu and Kashmir, Abdullah was called to a meeting with the Prime Minister in New Delhi on 24 January 1984. Tension was high.





National Conference supporters had clashed with members of the Congress (I) on several occasions during the past month, and finally, in one confrontation, six members of the Congress (I) had been killed.[56] Arun Nehru recalls how he tried to bring Farooq Abdullah 'in line,' but without success.

> 'Now, you listen,' I told Farooq. 'You listen when the PM speaks. Mrs. Gandhi had clearly said that it only takes one signature to get rid of Farooq.' So he begged for mercy, he was told to behave by Mrs. Gandhi, and he got a second chance and he went back, and the first thing he does when he comes home is to take a vote of confidence! This was his disaster and a most stupid thing to do.[57]

Farooq Abdullah explains in *My Dismissal* that he understood that there was a 'conspiracy to dismiss' him after the meeting in New Delhi.[58] On 27 January, therefore, he took measures to protect his position by seeking a vote of confidence in the Legislative Assembly. His victory in this vote was popular in Jammu and Kashmir, but it definitely made his enemies more determined to remove him from power. It also seems that Farooq Abdullah lost some of the sympathy of his powerful ally at the same time. B.K. Nehru was disappointed that Farooq Abdullah had demanded the vote in the Assembly without advance notice, which was unconstitutional. This did not make things easier for B.K. Nehru, who was defending Abdullah on constitutional grounds. Furthermore, it seems that B.K. Nehru acted as a guarantor for Farooq Abdullah in New Delhi when it was agreed that there should be no further provocation of the central government. The vote of confidence that followed soon after Farooq Abdullah's return to Jammu and Kashmir was perceived as a breach of that 'understanding.'[59] The upshot was that the central government decided it was time for a change of regime in Jammu and Kashmir. Or, as Arun Nehru described it: 'A hostile government in a sensitive border state became unacceptable.'[60] In April, Jagmohan was sent in by the central government to replace B.K. Nehru as Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. B.K. Nehru was transferred to Gujarat. After that, Shah declared that 'the real National Conference' was to hold its convention on 23 May. Farooq Abdullah held a separate convention with his group of followers a few days later. This action by the 'splinter group' led by Shah and the High Court lawyer Thakur, was instrumental, as previously mentioned, in the High Court's later ruling that the defection in July was legal. Meanwhile, on 28 June the letter of defection was signed by the MLAs.

Arun Nehru was later accused of having bribed the defectors. To this he comments 'That was never needed. What more can somebody want than to become Chief Minister and these MLAs were happy to do it anyway.'[61] Consequently, Shah finally became Chief Minister, Thakur became Deputy Chief Minister, and all the defectors received portfolios in the new Government.[62] The support from the central government was strong and the Union Home Minister declared that Jagmohan had 'not committed any unconstitutional impropriety' in dismissing the Farooq Abdullah Ministry.[63] The *Indian Express* reported:

> Replying to remarks that Mr Farooq Abdullah should have been allowed to test his majority, the Home Minister said it was not necessary that the majority should be tested always on the floor of the House. Every case depends on its merits, Mr [P.V. Narasimha] Rao said.[64]

Nevertheless, the new Government clearly lacked legitimacy. In the media and among the political elites the dismissal of Farooq Abdullah was generally regarded as unconstitutional and as a breach of democratic norms.[65]

The events of 1983 and 1984, mark the beginning of the drastic decline of democracy in Jammu and Kashmir, and it is important to take note that what characterizes the conflict today has little to do with what initiated the conflict. There is no evidence to support the idea that the dismissal of Farooq Abdullah was the result of irrational feelings of ethnic identity or due to religious sentiment,[66] or a response to demands for a separate state or accession to Pakistan – although these are the leading themes in the conflict today. What seems to have initiated the conflict is the failure of political institutions and leaders in Jammu and Kashmir to handle pressure from an interventionist central government. It is, however, not yet quite clear why the government was so eager to get rid of Farooq Abdullah. The national security argument was of course important, at least it had been the official attitude of the central government to Sheikh Abdullah. But there were two other levels of conflict. There was a conflict between the state and the central government and there was personal conflict between Farooq Abdullah and Indira Gandhi. Different observers lay differing emphasis on these as factors in the dismissal.

The first perspective is of a general nature and could be characterized as mainly political, and recurs elsewhere a reflection of the





centralizing tendencies of the Indira Gandhi leadership.[67] The deterioration in relations between the state and the Centre can be traced back to Farooq Abdullah's decision to join an alliance of regional parties from all over India – the so-called Opposition Conclave. In May 1983 fourteen important political leaders, all opposing the Congress (I), had committed themselves to this alliance at a meeting headed by the charismatic N.T. Rama Rao, who had just won the election in Andhra Pradesh leading the Telugu Desam Party, and Rama Krishna Hedge, who had done the same in Karnataka with the Janata Dal. This was during the last leg of the election campaign in Jammu and Kashmir, but Farooq Abdullah took the time to visit the meeting and promised to host the next meeting of the Conclave. Indira Gandhi expressed her deep concern over Farooq Abdullah joining what was perceived as a national anti-Congress (I)-alliance. Never before had the National Conference opposed the Congress (I) outside Jammu and Kashmir.[68] This was shortly after electoral cooperation between the Congress (I) and National Conference had broken down and Farooq Abdullah obviously felt he had to make new friends outside his own state. He kept his promise and hosted a meeting of the Conclave in Srinagar in October 1983. The theme of the meeting was State-Centre relations, and the Conclave meeting that followed in Calcutta in January 1984 specifically focussed on the problem of the central government's attempts to remove the opposition government not only in Jammu and Kashmir, but also in Tripura, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Karnataka. The fears of the meeting were not unfounded. A few months later, and in spite of his popular support, N.T. Rama Rao was replaced as Chief Minister in Andhra Pradesh.[69] So, from this perspective it might appear that Indira Gandhi's efforts to remove Farooq Abdullah from power were not attributable to any personal dislike. The strategy was rather to destabilize any state government considered a significant threat to the Congress (I) dominance, wherever it turned up.[70] There are, however, others who point to personal animosity between Farooq Abdullah and Indira Gandhi as the main reason for the dismissal.

The former Prime Minister Chandra Shekar, who was one of the leaders within the Conclave, explains that the relationship between Farooq Abdullah and Indira Gandhi was 'complicated.' Shekar recalls how Farooq Abdullah often claimed that he was like a third son to Indira Gandhi.[71] Without elaborating on this, Shekar continues that 'one could say that socioeconomic factors and such

were not the only factors behind the tense relations between the Centre and the State.'[72] A less enigmatic answer is provided by the former Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, B.K. Nehru, who is willing to comment on the deterioration in the relationship between Gandhi and Abdullah.

> But the very great ... I can only say enmity, that arose against Farooq, and between Mrs Gandhi and Farooq, I just have not been able to explain, except for one incident which is the only thing that I can possibly think of. In the elections [-83], Mrs. Gandhi had come to the state, and her final meeting was in the Iqbal Park. When she was addressing that meeting, a certain number of men at the back of the meeting undressed themselves and insulted her by showing her their private parts. This is something that happened, a lot of people did not notice, but she saw it, she never mentioned it, but I have a feeling that this was reported to her as being the doing of Farooq Abdullah. And that seems to have embittered her to such an extent that she simply could not think of Farooq remaining in office. Farooq is a gentleman – he would never dream of doing this. It was only his enemies who could. Like that idiot ... G.M. Shah ... Farooq says G.M. Shah did it. But to Mrs. Gandhi it was reported by Mr Sayeed and Fotedar, these petty people, looking after themselves, and she believed them. That is the only explanation I can offer for the bitterness that arose. The fact that Farooq joined the opposition had really nothing to do with her enmity. She did not like it – she would have preferred that he joined her. But that was not the real cause. The real cause was that she thought that he had organized this personal insult to her. And to womanhood, she was a very strong feminist. Any insult to her was an insult to her personally. It was there the complete lack of contact started. And she decided to depose Farooq at whatever cost. I refused to do that because it was not only unconstitutional but it was politically highly undesirable and dangerous. So, Jagmohan was sent to do it.[73]

And, to some extent contrary to the impression given in *My Frozen Turbulence*, Jagmohan himself agrees that he was well aware that Indira Gandhi wanted Farooq Abdullah removed as Chief Minister, although, he claims, she never directly told him to see that this was done.[74]

It seems that Farooq Abdullah was set up to take the blame for the worst possible insult to Indira Gandhi, and he never managed to defend himself against the allegations. The story of the relationship between Farooq Abdullah and Indira Gandhi ends tragically





here. In a parallel development, Indira Gandhi was fighting against the Khalistan movement in Punjab, and only three months after Farooq Abdullah was deposed, she was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguard. There is nothing that say that democratic credibility could not have been restored from this point onwards, but over the following period of five years the actions of the political elite in New Delhi and in Jammu and Kashmir steadily dispelled any hope of a continuation of democracy.

### *The election cartel: consociationalism taken too far*

The new Government of Shah lasted less than two years. Shah was soon considered a greater burden to the central government than Farooq Abdullah had been. As early as August 1984, Indira Gandhi expressed her concern over the inability of Shah to handle the increasing level of violence in the state. In June 1985 a clear rift opened between Congress (I) and Shah's faction of the National Conference.[75] During Shah's regime there was an increase in reports of insurgency from Pakistan in the Valley[76] and explicitly religiously defined political groups took root in the state. For example, the Islamic organizations Jamaat-e-Tulba and the People's League increased its recruitment of young Kashmiris in the Valley, and at the same time the Hindu organization Shiv Sena firmly established itself in Jammu.[77] Gradually, but at an increasing rate, extremist parties became more successful in using region and religion as the basis for political mobilization. Finally in March 1986, the Congress (I) withdrew its support for Shah, and Jagmohan imposed Governor's Rule. Just before the expiry of the six-month term of Governor's Rule, Farooq Abdullah reached an agreement to share power with the Congress (I) until new elections could be held. Considering the political background of the two parties, a quite unexpected, and to many observers amazing, alliance had been created. In November, Abdullah's support from the Centre was made manifest by the decision to reinstall him as Chief Minister. Shah was furious, and this marks the moment when his political career began sharply to decline. In desperation Shah declared that he was willing to make an alliance with anybody. It would not matter whether it was Jamaat-e-Islami, BJP or the Shiv Sena, as long as it helped to defeat the Congress (I) and Sheikh Abdullah's National Conference alliance in the coming elections.[78] Politically abandoned, Shah finally brought his political career to a complete halt a few years later by declaring that 'all Kashmiris are

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Pakistanis'[79] – a statement which, in the 1980s, meant the exit from Indian politics for a very long time. This period of frequent changes in loose alliances, of Governor's Rule and of central government intervention dramatically eroded Kashmir's democracy.

Even if alliances are made across ideological lines more often in India than in other democracies, the cooperation between the Congress (I) and National Conference that gradually developed before the 1987 election was too much for even the hardy Indian electorate to accept. Only a few days after it was clear that an alliance between Farooq Abdullah and the Congress (I) was in the making, a strike was arranged in the Valley by a hitherto unknown organization – the Muslim United Front (MUF). Later it transpired that the Jamaat-e-Islami, led by Ali Shah Geelani, and several other Islamic political groups and leaders in the Valley, had forged this new but somewhat fragile political unit. Abdul Ghani Lone of the People's Conference, a so-called 'pro-autonomy party' in Jammu and Kashmir, had long ago declared the need to gather the opponents of the National Conference and Congress (I) under one banner, and this had finally become reality. It seems that the closer the Congress (I) and the National Conference drew together, the more groups became firmly aligned with MUF. Finally it emerged that the Congress (I) and the National Conference had agreed not to oppose each other's candidates in the coming election. The Congress (I) would put up candidates for 31 seats and the National Conference for 46, a ratio of 40 to 60.[80]

An election where the two major opposition parties decide to enter into an alliance and work out a seat equation beforehand is surely unique. 'Tactical alliance' is a totally inadequate description of the extraordinary pact that was made. The term 'tactical alliance' usually refers to a temporary coalition or the cooperation of two parties who are considered to differ too much ideologically for a permanent amalgamation. This definition, as far as it goes, certainly applies to the National Conference – Congress (I) alliance, considering the historical legacy and the previous antagonism between the two parties. But at the same time this was something more. Tactical alliances are sometimes accepted by the electorate if there is a common enemy that both parties have to try to defeat, but cannot defeat individually. In the case of Jammu and Kashmir in 1986/87, however, it was the main opponents in a two-party dominated system that merged, and the aim, it seems, was to try to create a political monopoly to capture all the votes in the election.[81] This was more than tactical, it was cynical and rather than





a 'tactical alliance' or an 'election coalition' it can only be labelled an 'election cartel.' The important difference, from for example a Grand Coalition as discussed by Lijphart, is that in the cartel situation the main opponents divide the constituencies and power *before* the election.[82] It is, however, also possible to see the cartel created in Jammu and Kashmir as an extreme form of consociationalism. Lijphart argues that consociationalism is one of the devices that have contributed to India's high democratic performance.[83] Government by Grand Coalition is a solution which counters dangerous forms of political polarization. And in Jammu and Kashmir some observers welcomed the cooperation between the Congress (I) and the National Conference just because it was predicted that it would counter 'communalist and anti-nationalist elements.'[84] Inherent in the consociationalist theory is the idea that coalitions and elite cooperation smooth the effects of the bumpy interruptions that elections create in politics. The case of Jammu and Kashmir, however, illustrates what can happen if consociationalism is taken too far. 'Smoothing the effects of elections' can only be taken so far before the electorate will consider it meaningless to go to the polling booth. This mark was passed in Jammu and Kashmir. And when leaders of the dominating parties such as Farooq Abdullah and Rajiv Gandhi decide to create a cartel they are obviously displaying very little regard for the democratic ethos. The fact that democracy thrives on competition between parties, where the electorate makes the final judgement, was, it seems, completely forgotten or ignored.

The contempt for the cartel was immense. The *Times of India* correspondent who was stationed in Jammu and Kashmir tells an anecdote that reflects the disdain it provoked.

> When Rajiv was to announce the accord between the Congress (I) and the National Conference at a large meeting in Srinagar, high level Congress (I) representatives had to hide in the press tent since they were genuinely fearing that the rank and file members of the National Conference would beat them up if they were given the chance.[85]

But if the goal was to gain a monopoly of the votes, the plan failed, provoking only support and incentives for more radical forces of opposition. The Muslim United Front rapidly became the main opponent of the cartel. The leading faction within the MUF was the Jamaat-e-Islami, which had never accepted the accession in 1947

and openly expressed sympathies for Zia-ul-Haq's drive for Islamization in Pakistan. However, the alliance also relied on a number of leaders who had merged their religious and political roles. For example, the Maulana Abbas Ansari, the leader of the Shia Muslims in Kashmir, was one of the conveners of the MUF. Two somewhat different, but very influential, religious and political leaders were Mirwaiz Qasi Nissar Ahmad of the Umaat-e-Islami and Mirwaiz Mohammed Farooq, the chairman of the Awami Action Committee, who opposed several stands spearheaded by the more radical members of the Jamaat-e-Islami. Qasi Nissar openly declared his unconditional support for Jammu and Kashmir's status as an Indian state in the early stage in the MUF's formation, and Mirwaiz Mohammed Farooq criticised the MUF for communal tendencies and advocated 'unity of secular, democratic, and patriotic forces in the state.'[86] Nonetheless, although some criticism of the Jamaat-e- Islami is in order, it is an exaggeration to single out this party as solely responsible for the growing communal tension during this period. For example, the Jamaat-e-Islami has sometimes been blamed for the clashes between Hindus and Muslims in the Anantnag district in February 1986 (these have also been referred to as the first serious communal clashes in the state). After the riots, Balraj Puri visited the affected areas with a goodwill team and after talking to both Pandits (i.e. Kashmiri Brahmins) and Muslims in the area he concluded that:

> The easy transformation further confirmed the general impression in the Valley that the communal incidents were not spontaneous but engineered through a planned campaign of rumours and other means. Curiously, while accusing fingers were raised against some members of secular parties, we found no evidence of the involvement of the Jamaat-i-Islami.[87]

This suggests that parties such as the National Conference or Congress (I) may have played an important role in starting the riots. The religiously defined parties, it seems, cannot alone be blamed for creating tension in at this period. It may also be mentioned that Abdul Ghani Lone, who is today a separatist leader in the Valley, did at this time not argue against the validity of the accession in 1947. Instead, he advocated a return to the 1953 status of Jammu and Kashmir.[88] It is also important to note the diversity of opinion within the MUF leadership at this point in time. It reflects a democratic environment that allowed differences





of opinion on such sensitive issues as the accession, an environment which did not survive the latter phase of development in Jammu and Kashmir. But it also foreshadows the inability of the opposition forces to unify as one organization. This still remains one of the most serious problems for the separatists.

So, the stage was set for elections in the spring of 1987. The electorate was quite confused, and many people were upset by the cartel made by the no-longer eternal enemies, the National Conference and Congress (I). The atmosphere was tense and political sentiments were further agitated by the discontent expressed by the extremist voices within the MUF and also the BJP. Nonetheless, democracy probably still had a chance at this stage. Although the possibility of stable democratic development had already been eroded by the increased polarization of Muslims and Hindus, and of the citizens of Jammu and Kashmir and the central government, clearly most of even the extreme religious opposition parties and their followers agreed that democracy was still the right model for political competition. This is proved by the fact that the MUF put all its effort into the elections. There was still a way for discontent – in particular the dissatisfaction expressed with the National Conference and the Congress (I) – to be channelled. This avenue, however, was soon to be blocked by the Congress (I) and the National Conference, who had decided that a cartel was not enough to ensure themselves a big victory.

### *'To hell with the democratic process'*

The 1987 State Assembly election has, by several observers, been pointed out as a crucial turning point.[89] Before we can accept this claim, we need to dig deeper into what really happened. Quite apart from what has been said about the election cartel, was the whole election a fraud? To what extent were political opponents of the election cartel hindered from participating? At least some aspects of these questions require more detailed examination.

With 75 percent of the electorate voting, the level of participation was higher than average.[90] Out of the total of 76 seats, the National Conference won 40, the Congress (I) 26, the BJP two, and remaining eight seats went to so-called independent candidates.[91] Among those labelled independents we find four candidates who were competing under the MUF-umbrella. This confirms the conclusion briefly mentioned earlier – namely that, by comparison with the election result from 1983, the Congress (I) and National

Conference cartel provoked increased support for the parties on the flanks who explicitly defined themselves as Hindu or Islamic. Besides this, the effect of the cartel on the proportion of seats in relation to votes is also important.

Although the Congress (I) and the National Conference received 87 percent of the seats in the Assembly, they obtained the support of only 53 percent of the electorate. Almost 35 percent of the votes went to the various independent candidates, but they only received 10 percent of the seats. This may be compared with election results of 1983 when the combined number of votes for Congress (I) and the National Conference totalled 78 percent, which gave 95 percent of all the seats in the assembly. In other words, the correlation between votes and seats in Jammu and Kashmir was very much weaker in the 1987 election. So, before considering the question of fraud, it is necessary to consider some of the advantages given to large parties by the first-past-the-post system which is used in India. The average number of candidates per constituency was just under seven in the 1987 election, and this might be assumed to be one reason behind the disproportionately high number of seats given to the Congress (I) and the National Conference by the number of votes. It turns out, however, that the number of candidates in 1983 was not so very much fewer. There were 512 candidates in 1983 and this total had only grown to 528 in 1987. Therefore, one conclusion is that the high disproportionality in 1987 may, to some extent, have been caused by the fact that the electorate spread their votes over a larger number of candidates than before. But even more important to the outcome of the election was the cartel itself and the seat equation on which it was based. The cartel created a monolithic giant. And this efficiently increased the tendency inherent in majority systems to give large or regionally concentrated parties a higher proportion of seats in relation to votes than their smaller rivals. The timing of the creation of the cartel also had the effect of exaggerating the disproportionality because a new opposition to the alliance had little chance to develop in time for the election. This is important to remember when we try to assess the extent of electoral fraud. The unusually poor correlation between votes and seats may possibly have planted unfounded suspicion in the minds of those who were unaware of the peculiarities of the majority election system with single-member constituencies. Nevertheless, this does not enable us to dismiss all of the allegations that have been made.

Abdul Ghani Lone began his political career with the Congress party but, as was mentioned earlier, founded his own party, the





People's Conference, in 1978. In 1987 he contested the Handwara constituency in Jammu and Kashmir, and his main opponent was Chowdry Mohammad Ramzan from the National Conference. According to Lone, the counting of the votes there was disrupted by the Deputy Inspector-General of Police, A.M. Watali, who had arrived at the regional counting office by helicopter on the orders of Farooq Abdullah. Both Lone and his lawyer, Z.H. Shah, were hindered when trying to observe the counting and Lone claims that there was interference with the returns. Lone therefore filed a petition with the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir claiming that the election results had been falsified by the Counting Supervisors on the orders of the National Conference. The ballot papers were then collected from the Handwara constituency and taken in sealed containers to the High Court in Srinagar. The judge in Srinagar, however, decided not to act on Lone's petition, although a recount could have been taken fairly quickly on the evidence available.[92] There are several stories similar to Lone's from the election in 1987. After the counting of ballots was interrupted in some places, petitions were filed, but no courts took any action.[93] The exact extent of rigging is still difficult to assess, but qualified estimates have been made. An anonymous source at the Indian Intelligence Bureau estimated that approximately 13 seats may have been lost by the Muslim United Front because of electoral malpractice, and the same source comments that the election was quite unnecessary since the political opposition could never have formed a government with the support available.[94] The Congress (I) and National Conference cartel was almost unbeatable.

Despite the amount of fraud, apparently even fewer watchdog institutions reacted in 1987 than in 1983 – in fact there was almost no reaction at all. It seems that the alliance between the National Conference and the Congress (I) made the state authorities very reluctant to act in an independent manner. The Election Commission appears to have been quite inactive at the time, and the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir, which had the opportunity to look into some of the complaints made about the election, refrained from doing so. Instead the machinery of justice was used to circumscribe the political freedom of the opposition leaders. Shortly before the election, charges were brought against eight MUF leaders for 'rousing religious sentiments of the people and demanding independence from the Indian Union.' The cases were filed under the controversial Terrorist and Disruptive Prevention Act by the aforementioned Deputy Inspector-General of Police,

A.M. Watali.[95] According to *India Today* 'starting about two weeks before the election, 600 opposition workers were arrested in areas where the MUF, independents and PC candidates were showing strength.'[96] Two days after the election at least five MUF leaders were arrested for 'anti-national activities.'[97] After the election the MUF demanded that the allegations of rigging should be investigated,[98] but no action on a wider scale was taken by the central government, the court or the Election Commission. All complaints and suspicions of fraud were left by the National Conference and the Congress (I) to hang in the air like a poisonous cloud – and the consequences were disastrous. Abdul Ghani Lone who had competed through democratic institutions for most of his political career, is today a leading member of the separatist movement and he draws the following conclusions from his experience in the 1987 election:

> It was this that motivated the young generation to say 'to hell with the democratic process and all that this is about' and they said 'let's go for the armed struggle.' It was the flash-point. The thought was there, the motivation was there, the urge was there, the demand was there, and the opposition was there. The situation became ripe, and then a flash-point.[99]

This clearly describes the window of opportunity which opened for separatism to gain strength. Several young activists in the political opposition decided to join the armed struggle after the 1987 election. For example, the JKLF leader Yasin Malik had been the election agent of Mohammed Yusuf Shah, and both later reappeared in politics as separatist leaders. Malik became known as a leader of the JKLF and Shah, also more widely known today as Syed Salahuddin, is currently the leader of the Hizbul Mujahedin in Jammu and Kashmir. It seems from the interview material in this study, that the main reason for the decision to resort to armed conflict was the disillusion and frustration created by the progressive failure of the democratic system.

This is to some extent confirmed in a study of the views and perceptions of militant separatists which was carried out by a team of psychiatrists and psychologists from the Indian Army. They interviewed 31 captured militants and the results were presented in 1994. The findings are somewhat unexpected in a study carried out by the Indian military establishment and contradict views widely found among the Indian and Western media. The conclusion is that





the separatists were often driven by 'a deep sense of alienation.'[100] Harinder Baweja, one of India's journalists with most experience of the conflict, agrees with these conclusions and adds that '[f]rustration with the political system headed by former chief minister Farooq Abdullah, economic backwardness and a feeling of oppression were motivating factors for even the better known militants who are now important leaders.' The study also shows that violence was mainly seen as a means to oppose a corrupt system, rather than to spread Islamic fundamentalism or fight a holy war. Another motive was provided by the separatists' unemployment, 'and financial hardship /.../ since militant organizations look after the families of those arrested and killed.' It is necessary to remember that the Indian Army study was carried out in the 1990s, and that there may be differences between those who took part in armed struggle in 1987 – 1989 and those who joined the struggle after the outbreak of violence in 1990. Violence itself tends to create a motivation of its own regardless of the original motives. Thus military excesses were an important factor motivating those who joined the separatist movement in the 1990s, after the Indian Government had radically increased the number of security forces and stepped up its military presence. Those who made the same decision in the late 1980s were, it seems, reacting rather against corruption and abuse of government power via, for example, the police and the courts. There is more evidence to support this.

The idea that the events before and during the 1987 election increased the frustration is shared by Amanullah Khan, the Pakistan-based chairman of the JKLF. As was mentioned earlier, Khan considered launching an offensive in the Valley in 1983 but gave up because of lack of support. Three years later, Khan observed that the situation had changed radically and the youth of the Valley was 'ready.'[101] Khan explains that after he had been deported from England under most humiliating circumstances he felt 'a strong need for vengeance against India' which had, in his opinion, demanded his deportation. Again, some members of the organization tested the mood in the region and now they found that 'circumstances were ripe for an armed struggle.' By 1986 the contempt felt for the alliance and the political system was enormous, and Khan goes on to argue that this situation was mainly created by the state and the central government. The revolt was nourished by frustration, corruption and the betrayal of Kashmiriyat – the Kashmiri identity. Khan adds that 'the psychology of the youth is very important here. Young people have a

strong urge to do something.' Discontent has to be channelled, he says, and if there is a 'cause' to pick up, many will do so willingly. Khan recalls that after 1986 recruitment to the JKLF was uncomplicated and in 1989 the only problem was 'keeping up the standards of the newly recruited' – there was no difficulty in finding young men to join the movement.

The 1987 election was the trigger that led Kashmiris from the Valley to cross the border into Pakistan and enrol for military training in numbers without previous parallel.[102] In September 1989, when the National Conference and Congress (I) managed to pass the Jammu and Kashmir Special Powers (Press) Bill in the Legislative Assembly, bringing almost full press censorship to Jammu and Kashmir, such political opposition as had remained loyal to the democratic system, in spite of the election malpractice in 1987, said it had had enough. Against the background of discussion of the role of religion and political factors in the conflict, it is interesting to look at observations submitted by M. Syed Shah, an MUF member of parliament, to the Legislative assembly before his resignation. We should note that several members of the MUF have never denied that their main reason for entering politics is that they regard the accession of Jammu and Kashmir as illegal and that their aim is to protect Islamic identity and prepare for the rule of an Islamic state. But the justification for violence, it seems, is not derived from this religious view itself. It is clearly derived from the denial of civil rights.

> Hence our sincere advice to the Government, despite resignation from the Assembly, is that it should refrain from performing the role of a grave digger. As far as freedom of press is concerned any attempt to curb it will have grave consequences. /.../ The present Assembly was constituted in May '87. The Delhi Government as well as State government did succeed in winning the election and thus forming an 'allied' Government. However, this 'victory' was achieved not only by crushing and perishing the confidence and aspirations of the majority of the people, but also by damaging the credibility of the Delhi Government (Government of India). Such losses and damages remain irreparable at least for the time being. During the '87 election, the youth was quite active and enthusiastic. They participated in the election with great hope and expectations. And, having seen the support base of the MUF, they were confident that even if MUF does not form the Government, it will emerge as the a strong and formidable opposition. But people like Farooq





> [Abdullah] and Shri Rajiv Gandhi ruined their aspirations. These people with might and force got rid of those who believed in democratic means and wanted to achieve their rights through the democratic and peaceful means.[103]

Later in the document, the conclusion is drawn that it is time for the citizens of Jammu and Kashmir to commit themselves to a new type of struggle.

> We have to awaken the entire community and declare Islam the ultimate goal. Because freedom without Islam is like changing hands only. And Islam without freedom is static. We have to arouse the sense of Jihad and general sense of martyrdom amongst youths. We will have to inculcate a sense of character building, integrity and piety.[104]

This document can be seen as a prelude to the tragedy that ensued, and it is very important to our understanding of the conflict. It lends weight to the view that the order of causality is that first come the feelings of distress, alienation and betrayal at the manipulation of the elections and the hindrance of free political competition – or when the state begins to behave in the semirepressive character that was discusses in chapter two. Only then does the political opposition decide to propagate for holy war. In other words, the breakdown of democracy was not initiated by groups in Kashmir deciding to pursue a holy war. The decision to resort to violence was the result of the breakdown of democracy and all the evidence, so far, suggests that this development was largely the result of institutional restraint of the political elite by either the courts, the Election Commission, or the party organizations. Before the final arguments to support this interpretation are presented, attempts to put the Jammu and Kashmir conflict down to socio-economic factors or foreign intervention should be discussed.

## Alternative explanations

### *Socioeconomic conditions*

Several writers who have investigated the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir have referred to socioeconomic conditions in the area, and in particular discrimination against Muslims and in favour of Hindus in Government employment. The Pandits and the Dogras are the traditional elite in Jammu and Kashmir.[105] In particular the

Pandits, like Brahmins all over India, have been overrepresented in banks, private companies and salaried jobs in the public sector.[106] It would be natural to expect the overrepresentation of upper caste Hindus in the public sector to be a cause for of discontent. And even if it is hard to find data on discrimination on which to base a comparison with other parts of India, we might expect underrepresentation of Kashmiri Muslims in the public sector in Jammu and Kashmir to cause greater resentment than in other parts of India because this is a Muslim-majority state. The columnist and freelance journalist Prem Shankar Jha has argued that this imbalance is the most important underlying cause of the conflict and points out that if the problem were only that democracy has been denied in Jammu and Kashmir, the fathers of the young men leading the uprising today would have revolted much earlier. Most likely Jha is referring to the poor democratic record from independence to the mid-1970s discussed earlier. In other words, if lack of democracy were a cause of the conflict in the eighties, the 1950s and the 1960s would have produced an even more violent uprising since there was less democracy then. There are several reasons for treating Jha's hypothesis with caution.

To begin with, Jha's own position can be criticized with the arguments he advances against the hypothesis of the denial of democracy. If inequalities between Pandits and Muslims were the real underlying reason, why did the Muslims not revolt earlier against the Hindus, for example during the 1950s or the 1960s when discrimination may in some respects have been even greater than during the 1980s?[107] Data on class differences, labour and religious affiliation are unfortunately quite scarce, but there is no evidence yet available that discrimination against Muslims in Jammu and Kashmir increased significantly during the first half of the 1980s.[108] On the contrary, on a more general level of political life, the political influence of Muslims seems to have increased after democracy was introduced in the mid-1970s. For example, in 1987, the representation in the state Assembly was proportional to the religious division in the state.[109] That there were stronger reactions when democracy was denied in the 1980s than in, for example, the 1950s when democracy was absent, is natural, since most people in Jammu and Kashmir knew more about what they were being denied. The period from the mid-1970s to 1984 was one of democratic progress, freedom of expression and right to organize which was unprecedented in the history of Jammu and Kashmir. Naturally, the denial of these freedoms and the cessation





of this progress were felt much harder in their absence than when they had never been experienced.[110] Moreover, the authors that do refer to the few data available on recruitment to the public sector have to my knowledge never substantiated this hypothesis with interviews with separatists and leaders of their movement. Jha for example, goes so far as to say:

> In Kashmir militancy is not born out of poverty or economic deprivation, but of the despair of a small, select group of young people who form a new but disinherited middle class sector. /.../ [A] class that was trained to wield power, but denied the opportunity to do so.[111]

The problem is, in my opinion, that this point, although expressed with conviction, has yet to be proved empirically. Most of the separatist leaders interviewed in this study have been religious leaders or professional politicians for most of their lives. Among the separatists in the field, so to speak, some were students who might fit Jha's hypothesis, but there were also workers and members of other social categories.[112] None of the members of separatist organizations interviewed mentioned discrimination in the public sector as the main source of discontent. Alienation and the motivation to resort to violence, according to theses sources, stemmed generally from what was seen as the betrayal of the rules of democratic fair play and, more specifically, from the events during the 1987 election. These interviews covered most of the important leaders within the Hurriyat, the JKLF and one student organization, and also politically active lawyers, and some of the cadres in the militant organizations. But this is naturally not enough. A more systematic study of the separatists with a larger number of interviews, would be necessary before we could draw more conclusive inferences about the relation between class, inequality and the incentive to resort to violent separatism. But one thing is clear. Jha's observation is not supported by empirical data. The fact is that when it comes to socioeconomic factors, the information currently available does not allow these to be accepted as the reason for the emergence of violent separatism.

The political scientist Tara Singh Rekhi discusses some of the many problems of underdevelopment and concludes pessimistically that in Jammu and Kashmir '[t]he life of a common man is becoming more miserable every day and the spread of progress does not match with the growing demand.'[113] But although poverty and

underdevelopment are characteristics of Jammu and Kashmir, we should remember that this is not necessarily an outstanding case in India. If we look at the per capita net domestic product from 1970 – 1990,[114] Jammu and Kashmir is undoubtedly poor, but in comparison with other states in India, it is far from the worst off. This is equally true if we consider other socioeconomic indicators. Infant mortality was high with 72 deaths per thousand live births in 1981, and had only fallen slightly, to 69, by 1989. But at least nine other states fight mortality rates around one hundred, and in Karnataka and Himachal Pradesh the infant mortality rate rose slightly during this period. If we accept infant mortality as one of several possible indicators of the living standard, there is no evidence of a rapid turn for the worse in Jammu and Kashmir before the conflict broke out.[115] Although data may not be altogether reliable here, it seems that in terms of proportion of population living under the poverty line between 1977 and 1988 Jammu and Kashmir actually did better than most other states in India.[116] More data are available on a macro level for Jammu and Kashmir, but drawing conclusions concerning a causal connection with violent separatism is difficult.

The rate of unemployment was lower in Jammu and Kashmir than the Indian average in 1981, but is hard to see the development of the 1980s clearly in absolute figures.[117] The non-working proportion of the population in Jammu and Kashmir was 56 percent in 1981, while the average for India was 63 percent. Although this statistic gives some rough basis for some comparison between states, provided that the methods of measurement are the same, the figures cannot be simply interpreted as actual rates of unemployment. The figures may, for example, hide large numbers of workers employed in the 'unorganized sector' which is not registered in the surveys. Another problem is that censuses in India are taken at intervals of ten years. In Jammu and Kashmir the last census was taken in 1981. The conflict made it impossible to collect data in Jammu and Kashmir in 1991, which is a disadvantage. And when comparing with other kind of data available for the late 1980s or early 1990s we cannot still a clear picture of what happened in the crucial period of the mid-1980s.

The picture is fragmented. One source shows that the amount of factory employment was increasing steadily in Jammu and Kashmir in 1985.[118] Somewhere between 1985 and 1991 the rate of increase seems to slow down. This is consistent with the fact that the income level rises steadily in Jammu and Kashmir from 1950 to 1986. But





it should also be noted that even when the state reaches the peak of its economic development in 1986 with a per capita income of Rs. 683, it is below the national average at Rs. 772. Then a minor economic decline sets in. This is caused, according to Rekhi, by climatic conditions and the increased breakdown of law and order. But it was mainly during G.M. Shah's regime that violence in the state increased rapidly and consequently it preceded the decline in the economy. Therefore, the level of violence may not have been caused by the economic decline – Rekhi suggests it was the other way around. Economic decline seems to have been, at least to some extent, caused by the increase in violence. But we cannot be absolutely sure. Income levels are available for each year, but where factory employment is concerned we do not have annual figures. So it is possible that the rate of increase levels out just before 1985. But most industry in this state is not mechanized. In the Valley, where the separatism has some of its most important strongholds, and in the state in general, handicraft constitutes one of the dominant economic sectors.[119] As several sources show, employment in this sector increased continuously from the 1970s to the end of the 1980s, even during the period when democracy was in decline.[120] The Valley, however, which is quite dependent on the tourist industry, has suffered more since open violence broke out.[121]

I want to emphasize that the aim here is not generally to rule out the argument that poor socioeconomic conditions can cause conflicts. Undoubtedly they can. The point is that poverty cannot be assumed to lead automatically to violence or separatism. If it did, India would not survive as a state. For the moment, one more comparative point will suffice as illustration. Jammu and Kashmir is a poor state, but so is, for example, Kerala. Kerala, however, is not plagued by violence. On the other hand, Punjab goes through a period of vigorous economic development at the same time as it experiences the worst period of violent conflict since independence. So, in this particular case poor socioeconomic conditions and discrimination may have been one of the underlying causes in the conflict that evolved in the 1980s, but there is no proof that they provide the main explanation for the growth of violent separatism.

Finally, this discussion of possible causes of the Jammu and Kashmir conflict can be concluded by considering the idea that the uprising was caused by something that could be categorized as a political variable, or at least a factor not decided by socioeconomic conditions. I am referring to the argument that the conflict was

caused by a foreign power – more specifically by Pakistan. Space does not permit a full examination of this hypothesis, but it will be considered briefly.

### *The Pakistan factor*

Without any doubt, the Government of Pakistan have supported the uprising in Jammu and Kashmir since the end of the 1980s, allowing separatists access to arms markets and allowing them to establish bases inside Pakistan. Undoubtedly the Afghanistan war contributed significantly to the proliferation of arms in the region. After the Soviet Union withdrew its forces, the Kashmir conflict provided a less lucrative, but nonetheless desirable, new market for arms manufacturers in Pakistan. Arms bazaars such as the one in Darra Adam Khel, offer all the products needed for warfare at cheap prices hardly a day's journey from the poorly guarded Kashmiri border.[122] In addition to this, some groups involved in the armed struggle in the 1990s, for example the Harkat-ul-Ansar, have seemed to get direct support from members of the Pakistani Parliament and the country's administration. In spite of all this, the road to violent separatist uprising in Jammu and Kashmir which we are considering here, cannot simply be blamed on Pakistani involvement. Whatever the moral and legal aspects of the problem, supporting an uprising is not necessarily the same as causing it. As we have seen, Amanullah Khan tried his best in the early 1980s to drum up support for the JKLF but failed simply because the mood in the state did not allow for such a development. In the latter half of the 1980s the mood had changed and the evidence discussed so far suggests that this was caused by the political process inside Jammu and Kashmir. Nevertheless, some authors have suggested it was more directly caused by Pakistani scheming.

The theory is that the uprising in Jammu and Kashmir was part of a Pakistani government strategy designed to capture Jammu and Kashmir and to destabilize its archenemy India. The plan is often referred to as Operation Topac and allegedly it was devised by General Zia-ul-Haq. The first article on Operation Topac, however, appeared in the Indian Defence Review in 1989, where it is clearly said that the scenario is 'Part fact, part fiction.'[123] But after the article was published, and much as a result of the antagonistic relationship between India and Pakistan, it soon became widely accepted as factually based.[124] There is, however, no concrete evidence that the uprising in Jammu and Kashmir was, from the beginning, orchestrated by





the Pakistani government. This conclusion is also reached in a major research contribution by Robert Wirsing.[125] I agree with Wirsing that we may never find out the whole truth about Pakistani involvement, but we have learned from the political process that took place in the 1980s, that the disturbances in the Valley in 1990 were sparked off by internal conditions. We can, however, be certain that the leaders in Pakistan at least saw developments in Jammu and Kashmir in the late 1980s as gratifying. Even if active involvement is hard to prove, it is easy to show that there was passive support.

For this study, in-depth interviews were held with three of the central decision-makers in the Pakistan intelligence services (Army Intelligence and the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate – ISI) with a focus on the question of Pakistani involvement in the Kashmir conflict. Using information from these sources is of course problematical. Almost certainly, if there had been a scheme such as Operation Topac, none of these interviewed would admit it. Maybe some of these sources are no more than skilled deceivers who have constructed versions close enough to the truth to make a plausible account to me as a researcher.[126] Nevertheless, I think we should first listen to what they had to say, before passing final judgement.

Let us begin with the interview that revealed the least. What may be called the standard official version of the Pakistani involvement comes from the retired Chief of Army Staff, who is, however, still an active politician, General Mirza Aslam Beg. Beg was made the Vice Chief of Army Staff in 1987 under Zia-ul-Haq, and advanced to become Chief of Army Staff in 1988. After a visit at the Tamewali field firing range on the fateful day of 17 August 1988, General Zia-ul-Haq invited Beg to join him on the aircraft that was flying back to Islamabad.[127] However, Beg had his own aircraft, in which he departed only a few minutes later. It was probably a detonation in the cockpit which caused Zia's aircraft to crash shortly after take-off. Within hours, Beg had taken charge of the Armed forces and later he introduced democratic rule in the country, but he continued to serve as Chief of Army Staff until 1991. Therefore, had the military been supporting the uprising in Kashmir, Beg would have been giving the necessary orders both during the last period of Zia's rule and during Benazir Bhutto's first years in office.

Beg explained that Pakistan maintained a low profile after the Simla agreement and continued to do so until the 1980s.[128] The Kashmir question, he claimed, was never an issue during Zia's rule or under the Junejo government. He went on to explain that it was not until the Kashmiris themselves started an uprising that Bhutto

had an excuse to raise her own voice on the subject. This, he claimed to be the situation even in 1996. The leaders in Pakistan, he said, 'speak a lot' but there is no 'Kashmir policy.' On the military manoeuvres close to the Indian border during the intense situation that developed in 1990, Beg explained that these had nothing to do with Kashmir, and that if the Army had had other objectives 'something else would have happened.' The main argument that Beg kept repeating was that if Pakistan's intentions had been those described in Operation Topac, more dramatic action would have been taken in the 1980s or in the early 1990s. He would even go as far as to say that the Kashmiri separatists have not even had training camps or bases in Pakistan. Our next two sources supply more plausible interpretations.

Lieutenant-General Muhammad Asad Durrani denies the existence of a plan such as Operation Topac, but adds that the reason for this is that the government of Pakistan would have more to lose than to gain from such a scheme.[129] Durrani has long military experience which is echoed in his continued references to clear and rational cost-benefit calculations, in particular when discussing and evaluating various military strategies involving human life. Durrani was Head of Army Intelligence in 1988–1989, and Head of the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI) from August 1990 to March 1992.

Nothing really changed in the stance on Kashmir when Bhutto replaced Zia, he claims. 'Pakistan had simply too much to think about at home to want to risk rocking the boat and get into trouble with India.' Regardless of whether we are dealing with uprisings in Pakistan or in India, according to Durrani, one of the rules of the game that both countries play is that internal problems should always be blamed on the neighbour. Nevertheless, Durrani agrees that militant leaders have been allowed to move across the border into India and then back again; 'but this has always been so', he says, although he agrees that the number of guns that were moved across the border increased with the war in Afghanistan.

> Pakistan can take the credit for having thrown out the Russians, but the price was high and paid through the proliferation of arms in the country. And this became a problem for ourselves just as much for the Indians. Look at Baluchistan and Karachi.[130]

Then he continues to argue against the idea of Operation Topac by referring to the greater strength of the Indian Army. 'Just look at





the power equation. It's more than five to one. It's impossible.' The same line was taken by a colleague of Durrani who was interviewed in Pakistan a few months later.

This source, who is closely associated with the Pakistani Intelligence Service, wished to be quoted anonymously and the only point that needs to be made is that if there had been a planned insurgency in Kashmir, this person would undoubtedly have known about it. After a long introductory discussion where this source would only give a version similar to that of Beg, I explained that such arguments did not really answer the allegations of Pakistani involvement made by Jagmohan in *My Frozen Turbulence* or by the article by the Indian Defence Review Team. Then a more plausible view was delivered, and now the tone in the voice was less self-assured.

> At that time the Afghan Jihad was very successful. But they [the Kashmiris] came to us for help. But we did not want a two-front war. The gains from such action were far too uncertain. There was also pressure from Azad Kashmir. There was a political demand that we should help the Kashmiris in India. So we turned a blind eye to all that was happening there. But the discontent was already established. But we did not want to involve the Afghans in this. At the beginning we really tried to keep them out so they would not mix with the people from Kashmir, because then you could not know what would happen, but eventually the Kashmiris made their own contacts with the Afghans. What we did was that we turned a blind eye to the whole process and all that was happening along the border.

Then this source explained, like Durrani, that this type of passive support and blaming one's neighbour is just 'a part of the game between India and Pakistan.'

If these two last versions of what happened are fairly close to the truth, it is, to say the least, distressing that the risk of war between the two nations that has grown from the fighting in Jammu and Kashmir and the exchange of fire across the border is considered only 'a part of the game.' But this attitude towards life-and-death issues is not uncommon among high-ranking officials, and not unique to Pakistan and India. Although these sources would of course be unlikely to reveal an insurgency plan if there were one, these accounts are consistent with the hypothesis that the uprising was caused by internal factors inside Jammu and Kashmir, and so far there is no concrete evidence that there ever was an Operation

Topac. The Kargil war, which will be discussed in chapter six, revealed the involvement of the Pakistan army but in a much later phase of the conflict. Yet more proof is needed to support the argument that the uprising in Kashmir in the 1980s was orchestrated by the Pakistani government.

The idea that Pakistan instigated the uprising is also described as 'nonsense' by Amanullah Khan. But the JKLF has obviously been supported by the Pakistani Government in the sense that they have been allowed to operate from Pakistan, and there is no secret about this. The JKLF headquarters are in the middle of Rawalpindi, the JKLF-flag flies from the roof and a huge sign saying 'Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front' is posted on the building facing one of the busiest streets in the city.[131] Actually, the main difficulty in finding the office in Rawalpindi lies in the risk that the taxi driver may drop you off at the wrong separatist headquarters. This happened to me once. I was taken to the office of the Kashmir Liberation Cell, which is near the JKLF office. The taxi driver apologized, shrugged his shoulders, and explained 'there are so many of them here.' The JKLF has, however, had the most problematical relationship with the Pakistani Government. As was mentioned earlier, the JKLF in the 1980s and the 1990s demanded an independent state while the Pakistani Government wishes to bring the part of Kashmir in India into Pakistan, and this has been a continued source of tension. Lately, direct support by Pakistan has mainly been given to organizations such as Hizbul Mujahedin and by the end of the 1990s there seems to have been an increased emphasis on the Harkut-ul-Ansar.[132]

## The political explanation

After consideration of alternative explanations of the development of the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir, it still seems that the factors that first gave rise to the violence are quite different from the salient features of the conflict today such as religious antagonism, the demand for secession or Pakistani intervention, and the level of deprivation in the state. Unfortunately this type of change in rationale, which takes place over a period of time, is often overlooked, and not only in studies of conflicts. When social scientists search for explanations, their analysis far too often considers only the present. Possibly they listen too much to the nationalists who have a built-in interest in rewriting history for their own political goals. This is a well-known phenomenon in historical research –





especially to those investigating the history of nationalism. Renan is often quoted for his comment: '[f]orgetting, I would even go as far as to say historical error, is a crucial factor in the creation of a nation,'[133] and this is true of the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir. For example, the Maulana Abbas Ansari and his followers do not admit any differences of opinion within the Muslim United Front in 1986–87 on the question of the accession in 1947. But records show that the religious and political leaders did disagree on this and other issues. Many of them, however, are no longer here to answer questions on the matter. To mention a few tragic deaths of leaders in the Valley, on 21 May 1990, Mirwaiz Mohammed Farooq was assassinated, and afterwards his son, Mirwaiz Moulvi Umar Farooq, has acted as the chairman of the Hurriyat. On 20 June 1994 Qasi Nissar Ahmad, the religious leader, was assassinated. History is being rewritten by the nationalists and separatists, and less space is given to moderate positions. But hopefully the story told here has shown that the characteristics of the conflict today should be regarded as its *outcomes* instead of its *causes*. The political violence in Jammu and Kashmir has its roots in the acts of the political elites and the weaknesses of institutions, both in the bureaucracy and in particular in party organizations.

Democracy was established in Jammu and Kashmir in 1977. In the 1970s and the early 1980s, the National Conference was a fairly stable organization as long as Sheikh Abdullah was alive, and policies were still pursued on a secular basis. An underlying weakness in the system was, however, that the most important parties were organized dynastically or nepotistically. In 1983 both the Congress (I) and the National Conference were struggling for support and to hold their poorly organized parties together. Regional and religious arguments began to be more often used in the effort to attract political support, even if the overall character of the political messages from the parties could still be described as mostly secular. In 1987 the political situation had so deteriorated that political allegiances were defined and expressed in religious terms. For the elections that were held, the institutional watchdogs, such as the Courts and the Election Commission, had definitely been rendered toothless. Finally, in 1989, the political opposition gave up its belief in the usefulness of competing within what was left of the democratic framework. The development can be summarized in the following model (Figure 4.1), which tries to capture the essential signs and characteristic traits of some of the political parties in the state, indicating the decline of democracy in Jammu and Kashmir.

| | *Organizational stability* | *Secular politics* | *In favour of democratic competition* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1977 | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 1983 | No | Yes | Yes |
| 1987 | No | No | Yes |
| 1989 | No | No | No |

**Figure 4.1**

This also suggests some conclusions on the breakdown of democracy in more general terms. It seems that political violence is preceded by a political climate that can be characterized by several components, namely:

> a) party politics based on recruitment specifically by a single type of identity (i.e. no cross-cutting cleavages) such as language, religion, region (and theoretically, possibly also class, although this is less common in systems with weak party organizations);
> b) use by the parties of a political language of absolute irreconcilability;
> c) domination of political parties by charismatic leaders;
> d) political policies designed primarily to achieve short-term or narrow aims with regard to economic development; and
> e) foul play in political competition – in other words, systematic and successful attempts by a dominant political party to exclude or hinder an opponent from political competition.[134]

If these components are regarded as making up the phenomenon called *communal politics*, communalism, it may argued, is preceded by the deterioration of political institutions.[135] Furthermore, if we consider the components in factor *a* and *d*, we recognize something which is often referred to as a *populist strategy* if pursued by political parties. Without going more deeply into this topic, I would simply stipulate here that in this study the concept of 'populism' is used to describe the pursuit of economic policies with only short-term aims, and also the support of one particular type of identity for the purpose of winning elections.





Whether political institutions will decay or become well-organized, strong and independent, is decided in part by the political context but more specifically by the political elite. For example, if Sheikh Abdullah had decided to, there was probably an opportunity to build a more efficient party organization by the end of the 1970s, but this might have necessitated the eventual delegation of power, and consequently a risk that he and his family would lose influence. And when the internal party structure is weak, this will in the long run result in defections or attempts to split the party, as happened when G.M. Shah broke with Farooq Abdullah in 1984.

Thus, the causality of democratic breakdown and the outbreak of violent separatism in Jammu and Kashmir can be described like this (Figure 4.2):

*Political elite → Deinstitutionalization → Communalism → Violent separatism*

**Figure 4.2**

The intention here is not to give a normative opinion on communal politics, nor to try to sort out which political movements should be considered legitimate within a democratic system. A party that recruits mainly by a particular identity or from one stratum in society, for example those speaking a particular language, cannot *a priori* be regarded as anti-democratic. It is quite possible that the language policy in question has arisen in reaction to the repressive policies of a party wielding power. And therefore the point may be made that communal politics can be regarded as a symptom of some institutional disorder in a democratic system. Therefore, attempts to try to outlaw or prohibit communal politics cannot necessarily be justified by these observations. Such attempts are most likely only to worsen the situation. Political violence in democracies can be countered by functioning and well-organized institutions, and political freedom. This will be further illustrated in the next chapter by events and patterns in other parts of India.

# 5

# AVOIDING VIOLENT SEPARATISM IN INDIA

Why did violent separatism take hold in Jammu and Kashmir during the 1980s when other states that might have been regarded as potentially receptive to violent separatism remained within the Indian Union with far less coercion? Applying the theories on ethnicity discussed in chapter two, it could easily be argued that the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir was predictable. While most of the extreme primordialists, who see all forms of interaction of different groups as inherently dangerous, may be dismissed as xenophobic, Donald Horowitz' argument that ethnic party systems, unlike class-based ones, are subject to centrifugal forces, poses a more demanding challenge. Horowitz states that in ethnically divided societies political groups are forced to take more extreme positions if they are to enjoy continued support, whereas in the West the class- based political forces of the post World War II era have tended to compete for the middle ground.[1] Applying the logic of this analysis one might certainly anticipate a conflict in Jammu and Kashmir, but we also saw that Horowitz' theory could really not tell us *when* to expect violence. Nor does it explain why polarization occurs in the first place, why at times polarization decreases in intensity, and why at other times it leads to political disintegration. These theoretical weaknesses are further illustrated if we look at the history of integration in states in India other than Jammu and Kashmir.

Although political violence is one of the most serious problems facing India, one might also ask why is there not more of it? India is unmatched in the scale of its ethnic and social diversity. Therefore, instead of confining ourselves to the case of Kashmir, it may be instructive to compare developments in Kashmir with those in states that have coped better with integration. It has been argued in previous chapters that it was political factors that caused violent





separatism in Jammu and Kashmir in the late 1980s. Further evidence for this view is provided by examining other cases which have produced integration against the poor odds. India is, in fact, rich in such examples. Let us therefore go back to the main arguments from the analysis of Jammu and Kashmir, and then compare developments there with those in Tamil Nadu from the time of independence when the demand for a separate state, Dravida Nadu, was made by the Dravida Munnetra Kazagham (DMK), to the time when the demand was dropped in the 1960s.[2] Tamil Nadu is a good example of a state that was on the brink of falling into the vicious spiral of violent separatism but finally found the road to integration. The comparison can then be taken one step further by looking at a state that has several features often pointed out as conducive to separatism, especially with regard to regional identity, and yet, or at least not after independence, has not produced such a movement. West Bengal is the state concerned and it continues to defy most patterns of development that are typical not only of India but also of economically poor countries in general. The accounts of the developments in the two states are by no means exhaustive in explaining why these states have remained within the Indian Union. They should first and foremost be seen as contrasting cases that shed light on what went wrong in Jammu and Kashmir. However, this reservation does not prevent the extraction of broad generalizations on the causes of violent separatism that may threaten not only India's, but any democracy's, nation-building project.

## Exit, voice and loyalty to the nation

The viability of the nation state is dependent on the legitimacy of rule of the state within its defined boundaries. In a democracy, the state cannot rule its administrative area without the overriding loyalty of its citizens. When the administrative claims of the state coincide, and harmonize with, the area to which the demos is loyal, the nation-state is consolidated. However, when democratic institutions are eroded, so is the loyalty of the demos towards the nation-building project. This point is made clearer if we make use of Albert Hirschman's important contribution to the field of organisational theory where he argues how *loyalty* is related to the availability of avenues for *exit* and *voice*.[3] Like many others have pointed out in the field of social sciences, Hirschman's observation is quite relevant when studying the stability of political systems. It seems that exit

and voice are just as crucial for the survival of democracies as they are for the commercial success of actors in the market. Naturally what is meant by exit and voice can be debated at length but hopefully a brief explanation will suffice to show how the concepts can be applied in this study of democratic development.

Exit and voice can be seen mainly as channels for expressing discontent or criticism from the point of view of the customer in organization theory. In this study it applies mainly to citizens in democratic system. When dissatisfied, or for any reason moved to express disapproval, citizens can simply criticize their political leaders within the party. This is one example of the voice option. If that is not effective the exit option can be chosen, which in its simplest form means changing party preferences. There are of course other avenues open for citizens to express more general discontent. And in this case we can regard institutions provided by the state to receive complaints as options for voice. If corrupt practices are discovered, the police are supposed to handle complaints. If electoral malpractice is suspected, the election commission and the courts are intended to investigate and handle the charges, which, in an ideal world, should relive the discontent. When these institutions are not effective or available to the citizens, we may expect a more radical expression of discontent. The citizen may then attempt to protest against the central government using means that are not allowed by the law – a person may decide to exit from the democratic dialogue. In many cases violent protest is a reaction when other peaceful avenues are exhausted. But not always. We have now entered a discussion that may appear to have the normative aim of stating when violence is justified. This is of course not my ambition. Exit and voice are mainly used as labels for avenues of discontent, regardless of whether we judge that it is justified or not. Furthermore, exit and voice are far from comprehensive labels for all the factors of interest here. The strength of these concepts are, however, that they are terms for common phenomena that can be studied in most political structures, or so-called functional equivalents that facilitate comparison.

Nevertheless, recalling the theoretical discussion in chapter two, cultural and socioeconomic conditions and their effect on loyalty will naturally also be of particular interest. But most important, it will be argued here, Stein Rokkan's summary of Hirschman's work should be kept in mind: 'In Hirschman's model, you cannot reduce both the exit and voice option at the same time without endangering the balance of the system.'[4] And if we translate what this may





imply to a study of politics, we should expect that a democracy out of balance is one that is violent prone.

## Why separatism turned violent in Jammu and Kashmir

Before starting to analyse what went right in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, from the point of view of India, let us, from Hirschman's perspective, recapitulate what went wrong in Jammu and Kashmir. From 1977 onwards, for almost ten years, it seemed possible to refute Jinnah's two-nation theory by pointing to the democratic state of Jammu and Kashmir, integrated with India after free elections. The prevalent mood of the electorate was one of moderation, with extremist parties such as the secessionist Jamaat-e-Islami and the BJP being shunned by the voters, and with attempts by separatist forces to launch a movement proving unsuccessful. The channels for both exit and voice were definitely present, but the political parties and other democratic institutions upholding these avenues of political expression were deteriorating.[5]

The Congress party was desperate to regain power following the defeat of 1977 after the emergency and it gradually came to adopt more populist strategies both in Jammu and Kashmir and at national level. Increasing tension between the National Conference and the Congress party finally led to the dismissal of Farooq Abdullah. With these events, restlessness increased in Jammu and Kashmir and in particular in the Kashmir Valley. Loyalty to the Union decreased although the channels for voice were still the main means of expressing criticism. Farooq Abdullah remained the legitimate leader since he had not gone against the will of his electorate. Newspapers criticized the central government and the removal of Abdullah was challenged in court.

But when Farooq Abdullah was made Chief Minister by Rajiv Gandhi and the decision was taken to create the cartel with the Congress party, several supporters finally chose to defect from the party. A new contender for power, which gained much support from those angered by the formation of the cartel, was the Muslim United Front. This was a new group of political parties, with the Jamaat-e-Islami as its main base, which appealed to both religious and political sentiments in its challenge to the Indian central government. Using Hirschman's terminology one could say that some parts of the electorate still attempted to channel their discontent through voice, but many also chose the exit option, i.e. support for another party.

The MUF was robbed of many votes by the manipulations of the Congress party and the NC in the 1987 state assembly election. As if this were not enough MUF leaders were arrested for charges of 'disloyalty' to the Indian Union. When the National Conference and Congress (I) passed the Jammu and Kashmir Special Powers (Press) Bill in the Legislative Assembly, bringing almost total press censorship to Jammu and Kashmir, the political opposition that had stayed loyal to the Union and the democratic system in spite of the electoral malpractice of 1987 said they had had enough. But now there were few legal channels left for the expression of political discontent. This is when the status of Jammu and Kashmir as a part of the Indian Union began to be more seriously challenged. To apply the terms of Hirschman's model, when all the routes for exit and voice were eliminated, the system became unstable. Or, to put it more graphically, the Valley went up in flames.

On the matrix in Figure 5.2, Jammu and Kashmir went from the top of the first column in the late 1970s, to the bottom by the end of the 1980s, but it could have been stopped on its way down. This can be illustrated by comparing with Tamil Nadu that was captured before it fell outside of the framework of the Union, and West Bengal that never, in spite of harsh condition, tried to 'drop out.' There is much to be learned from looking at how the loyalty of Tamil Nadu and West Bengal to the Union was preserved. We begin by examining how a potentially violent situation was defused in Tamil Nadu.

Attitudes to relationship with the Indian Union

| | Jammu & Kashmir | Tamil Nadu | West Bengal |
|---|---|---|---|
| Non-separatist | x | x | x |
| Separatist | x | x | |
| Violent Separatist | x | | |

**Figure 5.2**

## Separatism and integration in Tamil Nadu

Today, more than twenty years after the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (ADMK) split from the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), these two parties differ more in the charisma of their leadership than in their ideological content. In their





emphasis on the separateness of Tamil identity, both parties deliver almost identical messages. In the campaign for the 1996 election the DMK president, Muthu Karunanidhi, was first to declare that he would be the guardian of Tamil identity and that this should be politically recognized by giving greater autonomy to Tamil Nadu. He even went so far as to suggest a constitutional solution similar to that provided by Article 370 for Jammu and Kashmir.[6] Shortly after the press had publicized the DMK message, reports on the ADMK party manifesto declared that:

> Tamil Nadu would campaign for more State autonomy to fulfill aspirations of the people on the question of language, literature, culture and ethnic pride. The state was prepared for any sacrifice to strengthen the country's sovereignty and integrity as also the peaceful existence of the people.[7]

The demand for a higher degree of autonomy dates back to the time before and shortly after independence. Then the party which preceded both DMK and ADMK was much more radical in its demands. Greater autonomy was not enough. It was argued that the people of South India needed an independent state.

### *The demand for Dravida Nadu*

Early in the twentieth century, polarization increased between Brahmins and members of the expanding Dravidian movement.[8] Brahmins who had gained from British rule generally backed the Home Rule movement (founded in 1916), while the 'forward Shudras' founded the Justice Party (South Indian Liberal Federation) in 1917, where Shudrahood became increasingly associated with the Dravidian and non-Brahmin political identity.[9] In the 1920s, Brahmins were sometimes described by the elite Shudras not only as oppressors but even as a foreign power on a par with the British colonial rulers. In 1925, Erode V. Ramaswami Naicker launched the Self-Respect Movement and by the end of that decade he was formulating the most radical 'anti-Aryanism.'[10] In other words, the south of India was being polarized against the north. The radicalization of Dravidian identity and the accompanying political demands connected were more definitely formulated in 1937–38.[11] At this time Hindi and Hindustani were introduced as new topics in the schools and this created widespread protests in the south. Naicker was elected as the new leader for the Justice

Party and the Dravidian movement openly demanded a separate state – Dravida Nadu.[12]

> On July 1, 1939, the first 'Dravida Nadu Separation Day,' speeches were given explaining the genesis of the demand for separation. The language issue was portrayed as a superficial manifestation of the sinister penetration of Aryan ideas into Tamil culture through the political control of the Brahmins. The slogan 'Dravida Nadu for Dravidians' symbolically united the moderates and radicals in the Dravidian movement, as well as galvanizing many sympathizers outside movement organizations.[13]

A more effective organization, the Dravida Kazhagam (DK), emerged after the merger of the Justice Party with the Self Respect League in 1944. From this point onwards the charismatic orator C.N. Annadurai gradually took a more prominent leadership role. Finally a split developed in the party. Simplifying the issue, it may be said that Ramaswami Naicker was more concerned to mobilize only the elite of the backward castes, doing so, moreover, in a somewhat authoritarian manner, whereas Annadurai sought to mobilize the masses on a wider scale and advocated internal democracy for the party. In 1949, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (the Dravidian Progressive Federation) was created with Annadurai as its leader, and siphoned off almost three-quarters of the support of the DK.[14] Paradoxically, from 1954 to 1963 the DK backed the Congress party and its local leader, C.M. Kamaraj. The DMK, on the other hand, put more emphasis on Dravidian ideals, which it promoted with Tamil film productions, and advocated the secession of Dravida Nadu, increasingly supported by, among others, academics.[15]

It should be stressed that separatist demands and the turbulent political climate at this crucial stage of development, when democracy was being introduced, did not lead to widespread attempts to overthrow the democratic system, from either the central government or the state parties. Political institutions seem to have functioned in Tamil Nadu to such extent that democracy continued to be the accepted form of government. In other words, loyalty to the political system survived, because channels for voice and exit remained open. This is reflected in the intensity of debate, where radical opinions were freely formulated and new parties were formed which offered voters a wider choice of representation and several channels for expression of opinions and discontent. Maybe the standard of internal democracy in parties such as the DK was no





better than in the National Conference in the late 1970s and early 1980s, but at least political alternatives were allowed to develop freely. At this time Nehru also maintained his secular approach to politics and this was continued in Kamaraj's policies.[16] This trend was broken by Indira Gandhi in Jammu and Kashmir in 1983, which aggravated the situation there. Ashutosh Varshney comments on Indira Gandhi's election campaign in that year as follows.

> Expressing her sympathy with the Hindus of Jammu who, according to her, lived in a Muslim-majority state, she gave the first signs of using blatantly communal messages in search of votes, a trend that was to deepen later in Congress' electoral politics.[17]

Since the positions of the DMK and the Congress on social issues, in for example the 1957 election, were quite similar, the DMK could be said to have used the demand for a Dravida Nadu as a profile for opportunistic reasons. But there is no doubt that the founders of the DMK sincerely believed in a Dravida Nadu. Those who were politically active then have no difficulty recalling that there were strong forces advocating separatism in South India during this period.

Murasoli Maran, who is a nephew of Karanunidhi, and has represented the DMK in the Lok Sabha for 27 years, remembers the excitement with which he supported the demand for Dravida Nadu.[18] Maran first became an MP in 1967, but he had been politically active since his youth. When he went to college, he joined student groups in which no one doubted that the political future was in a separate state. At that time, Maran recalls, his enthusiasm led him to write a book on how an independent Dravida Nadu could survive. The polarization of the time, however, included several dimensions. Another veteran of South Indian politics who was also one of the founding members of the DMK, Era Sezhiyan, points out that resistance to the centre was not provoked only by the attempts to establish Hindi as the main language.[19] Hindi is closely related to Sanskrit, which is the scholarly language of the Brahmins. Therefore, Sezhiyan explains, Hindi symbolizes Brahmin dominance against which the Tamils have revolted. This is expressed at greater length by the anthropologist Nicholas Dirks:

> The rhetorical politics of the Dravidian movement depended upon a number of fundamental assumptions and classificatory logic. Brahmans and Brahmanism were synonymous with Aryans and Aryanism; Aryans were northern invaders and so where

> Brahmans. Elaborate historical anthropoligies were constructed and unleashed to support these syllogisms and to sustain the view that Dravidian once had a great non-Brahmin polity and civilisation, which had been destroyed by Aryan conquest and Brahman hegemony. C.N. Annadurai was one of the most effective propagandists of this view.[20]

Era Sezhiyan, too, supported the demand for a separate state. Interestingly, Sezhiyan and Maran strike a similar theme when they talk about the early days of the DMK. Both agree that violence was not even considered as a serious option as strategy for achieving a separate state.[21] What they both emphasize, though, is that a high level of trust in political institutions such as the courts, the police, the constitution, and the central government (in particular its pledge to play by the rules and its secularism) was decisive in retaining the non-violent policy at the organized party level. The DMK's general position was that as long as the central government played within the framework of the established democratic institutions, so would the DMK.[22] Therefore, separatism in the south did not enter the same serious spiral of violence as in Jammu and Kashmir, although it was close to it on many occasions. Instead, the movement was gradually deradicalized, and in 1963 the demand for a Dravida Nadu was formally dropped from the party programme. The important question here is why? How did the separatist demand become unsuitable, thus ensuring the integration of the south?

### *From separatism to regional autonomy*

When this question was put to Era Sezhiyan and Murasoli Maran, both immediately answered that the war with China 1962 was the decisive factor and added that the significance of the war is reflected in the speech Annadurai gave to the Lok Sabha at that time. Both Maran and Sezhiyan held prominent positions in the movement then and they explain that the leadership of the DMK simply had to accept the Indian Union for the sake of its security in the shadow of the threat from its large neighbour.[23] In other words, the main explanation is outside pressure. Nevertheless, when reminded of the more detailed course of events, both Maran and Sezhiyan agree that the demand for Dravida Nadu was in practice dropped not only before 1963, but before 1962.

After the reorganization of the states in 1956, separatist parties in India, including the DMK, feared they would be outlawed.





According to Barnett, E.V.K. Sampath who was leading a faction within the DMK, mainly against M. Karunanidhi and the 'film-star section' of the party, argued that 'Dravida Nadu was not feasible and that if the Delhi government made separatist parties illegal, as seemed likely, the DMK would be destroyed.'[24] The political scientist Robert Hardgrave, too, traces the decline in support for Dravida Nadu within the DMK as far back as to the Tiruchi party conference in 1956, when the party decided to compete in the 1957 elections.

> Dravidasthan, the symbol of Tamil Nationalist aspiration, was at the most a side issue, for the Manifesto implicitly accepted the existing Constitutional order.[25]

Laying less emphasis on Dravida Nadu seems to have brought some clear rewards. Although the Congress party won a decisive victory in the 1957 elections, the DMK firmly established itself as the second largest party in the state. After the elections, the DMK managed to expand its power base, in particular among backward castes, the urban middle class, and the younger age groups.[26] It seems that the more the party distanced itself from the demand for Dravida Nadu, the more it was supported. In 1958, the well-educated Brahmin V.P. Raman joined the party and became the most ardent opponent of Dravida Nadu among its leaders.[27] In November 1960 the elite of the DMK, including Raman, decided at a meeting held in the absence of Annadurai to delete the demand for Dravida Nadu from the party programme. Finally, the DMK redefined its political stance and, together with the party's more radical social reform projects, the demand for Dravida Nadu was officially dropped in 1963. Barnett also shows that the aforementioned E.V.K. Sampath had abandoned the idea because it was not considered 'practicable.'[28] However, Sampath left the party after opposing Karunanidhi and Annadurai, so the question is whether similarly pragmatic considerations influenced other leaders who remained within the DMK.

Murasoli Maran and Era Sezhiyan gave similar answers and to some extent confirmed Sampath's position when they were asked to comment more fully on the reasons for deradicalization of the DMK. It seems that the China factor was not the decisive one, after all. Pragmatism and the sentiments of the electorate seem to have played the crucial part. Maran explains that there was not really enough support for Dravida Nadu in Tamil Nadu at the time and

that finally the conclusion was reached that it was no use pursuing this demand. 'People felt associated with India. So, I am Tamil first but I am also Indian. Both can exist together provided there is space for cultural nationalism. That is why we are fighting for federalism.' After some discussion, Era Sezhiyan declared that it was impossible to continue to demand Dravida Nadu when the policy lacked support not only in Telugu, Malayalam, and Kannada-speaking areas, but also in the Tamil-speaking areas. Sezhiyan was a member of the committee that wrote the new party programme, from which it was decided to omit Dravida Nadu. There was, he explains, consensus on the view that it was more practical to demand a higher degree of autonomy for Tamil Nadu. By taking this position the DMK might receive the support of other states in India.

Between the situations in the late 1970s and the 1980s in Jammu and Kashmir and in the 1950s and early 1960s in Tamil Nadu there are both important similarities and important differences. During the 1970s and early 1980s, Jammu and Kashmir was on a strikingly similar course to that of Tamil Nadu in the early 1950s. Both states had serious quarrels with the central government, and in both states the major political forces agreed that it was desirable to operate within the democratic institutional framework. Both states had separatist parties, the DMK in Tamil Nadu and Jamaat-e-Islami in Jammu and Kashmir, and both parties faced a similar situation: as long as democratic institutions were functioning, popular support for separatism remained low. Jamaat-e-Islami won only one seat in the 1977 Vidhan Sabha election and none in that of 1983. The DMK had much stronger support and won 50 seats in 1962, but this has to be compared with the Congress party victory with 139 seats. Here the resemblances stop, however.

After the DMK had decided to relinquish its demand for Dravida Nadu, the 1962 figures were almost exactly reversed in the 1967 election. The DMK won a clear majority with 138 seats and the Congress party received only 50 seats. When the DMK became less radical in its view on the Indian Union, it gained ground. The Congress party accepted its defeat and may possibly have seen advantages in the situation; it did not exert itself to regain power in the state. In future, the Congress party would instead rely on alliances with the leading contestants in the state. In Jammu and Kashmir the central government employed cruder tactics which finally blocked all avenues for expression of





discontent. This did not happen in Tamil Nadu. Undoubtedly many leaders were alarmed by the central government announcements that demands for secession would not be tolerated after the States Reorganization Act, but the principal reason for dropping the demand for Dravida Nadu seems to have been that it lacked popular support. And the absence of brutal central government intervention in party politics held separatism at bay. It may therefore be concluded that democracy, despite some perceptions (found at times as high as at central government level) that it is a threat to the nation-building process, promoted integration. Furthermore, the strength of democracy in the 1950s and 1960s in Tamil Nadu and India averted further threats.

In 1962, the Congress party won the election while the DMK was badly shaken by divisions within the party that resulted in the formation of the Tamil Nationalist Party (TNP) led by Sampath. Once the demand for Dravida Nadu was abandoned, the DMK devoted more attention to the language question. The central government had decided that by 1965 Hindi would be the official language, but after some pressure from Annadurai and the DMK, Nehru gave the impression that he was willing to postpone the introduction of Hindi in Tamil Nadu indefinitely. On Republic Day in 1965, less than a year after Nehru's death, the central government, in spite of previous indications, announced that Hindi was to replace English as the official language. This caused two months of rioting in Tamil Nadu. The Tamil Nad Student's Anti-Hindi Agitation Council was created and took a more radical stand than the DMK. Finally, on 11 February, the Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri, decided to postpone the change indefinitely. The Congress party and the central government clearly decided to pay this prize in order to avoid violence. The Congress party lost the 1967 election and the DMK won its first major victory, but one important goal was achieved. Although the DMK was more popular, the spectre of separatism had disappeared as a serious threat to the Union.[29]

Ever since then, the Congress party has been unable to build up a strong position in Tamil Nadu. It has instead relied on alliances, alternating between the two major factions that grew from the DK, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) and the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (ADMK). The future of separatism in Tamil Nadu is difficult to predict. At present, there are only demands for a higher degree of autonomy.[30] But it should also be said that this state of affairs represents a major achievement. Tamil Nadu could have drifted away from the Union in the early days of

the building of the Indian nation, but as democratic institutions were upheld, a solution was found that destroyed support for separatism and violent solutions. The important ingredient in this solution was to keep playing by the democratic rules and allow the options of voice and exit. Hirschman's assertion that 'exit and voice are two basic, complementary ingredients of democratic freedom' has undoubtedly captured a central aspect of the problem studied here.[31] There definitely remain strands of opinion in Tamil Nadu which emphasize differences from 'the rest of India' rather than similarities.[32] Such a cultural heritage will always be a resource to separatist movements. Nevertheless, as will be shown in the case of West Bengal, such a culture may not produce separatism at all.

## Loyalty to the union in West Bengal

Although it could be argued that West Bengal appears a very likely candidate for separatism, and despite the fact that this state has certainly been plagued by violence and bad governance, West Bengal has not produced a large-scale Bengali separatist movement.[33] Discontent has not yet found expression in demands for a separate political unit. It is therefore of interest to discuss the path of political development that West Bengal has, instead, trodden. It is natural to begin by asking whether cultural ties explain why Bengal has remained loyal to India. If pressure for a separate state is assumed to be related to distinctiveness of ethnic identity, West Bengal presents a paradox.[34] Where separatism could be expected, we find almost nothing of the kind.

### *Bengali Esprit*

In political and cultural life in West Bengal the emphasis on the unique nature of the history and identity of Bengal is very striking. It is not only in general terms that Bengal and Calcutta have been a home of intellectual life. As long as Calcutta was the capital of the British Empire in India, it was also a centre of resistance to colonial rule. More than a decade before Gandhi would launch his campaigns for Swaraj (self-rule), the Swadeshi movement evolved in Bengal in 1904.

> [T]he Swadeshi or 'own-country' movement referred first to Bengal and then to all of India, which was to follow Bengal's lead in boycotting British goods.[35]





The partition of Bengal in 1905 gave a strong impulse, especially via the Bengali students, to the Swadeshi movement. The Calcutta-born writer and poet, Rabindranath Tagore, was one of its most renowned leaders, and when the partition provoked protests he composed what became the national song for the movement.[36] Tagore's writing also shows a conviction that an autocratic Bengali leader would lead the campaign against the colonial rulers. In this connection, the historian Leonard Gordon makes an interesting observation.

> His blithe assumption that the rest of India was waiting to accept the lead of Bengal is a typical Bengali assumption of the period; there is a strong element of ethnocentricity in Bengali writing of the Swadeshi period to which even the most insightful were prone.[37]

This characteristic seems in that case to recur in later important Bengali leaders. Questioning his contemporary Tagore's more non-violent approach to the struggle for independence, Aurobindo Ghose propounded a revolutionary doctrine that drew on the 'moral and religious superiority of the Bengali.'[38] Later, during the Second World War, 'Netaji' Subhas Chandra Bose recruited and took charge of a small army composed mainly of Indian prisoners of war to oppose the British. He died as a national hero in 1945. Bose admired Chitta Ranjan Das, one of the leading Bengali nationalists, and strongly identified with Bengali culture. Although Subhas Chandra Bose was also an admirer of the most amoral and authoritarian leaders that Europe and the Soviet Union produced during the 1930s and the 1940s, his psychological impact should not be overlooked.

> The news of Netaji's death created an emotional impression in the minds of the common Indians. They felt it was Netaji who actually fought the British face to face for India's freedom, while so-called Congress leaders acted like professional politicians who gave useless lectures and had merely went to jail time and again, without gaining anything substantial for the country's freedom.[39]

This quotation from a pamphlet on Bose's life also reveals some of the anti-Congress sentiment that continued to grow after the capital was transferred to Delhi by the British in 1912. As explained by Gordon, it eventually expanded into increased scepticism regarding the central government.

> Two major revolts against the Gandhian nationalist leadership received strong support in Bengal. The first was the creation of the Swaraj Party in the 1920s, led by the Bengali Chittaranjan

> Das. The second was the challenge of the left in the 1930s, led by another Bengali, Subhas Chandra Bose. The ultimate frustration of these attempts to break Gandhian supremacy, together with the failure of Hindu- Muslim alliances in Bengal, has contributed to the strong resentment against the national government still harboured by Bengalis in post-1947 West Bengal.[40]

West Bengal is unique in the history of its leading intellectuals, who come from the elite Bhadralok community. These thinkers, many of them possessing links with the landowning Zamindars in the state, produced their own radical movement with a distinct Bengali nationalism and, in several cases, with militant tendencies.[41] We find certain characteristics that may be referred to as the Bengali 'esprit.' Before independence the popularity of these groups left no opening for the Congress party representatives in the legislature. The point to be made here is that this is precisely the type of historical legacy that certain social scientists would have adduced as an 'ethnic explanations' if there had been such a phenomenon as Bengali separatism in India after independence. A strong tradition of distinctive identity is a type of cleavage and commonly seen by, for example, Horowitz, as a cause of state-centre antagonism and, sometimes, ethnic violence and separatism. Recalling some of the primordialists mentioned in the chapter two, we can easily imagine how other authors would describe the situation above with metaphors of cauldrons of ethnic sentiment, 'simmering' for long periods, before finally 'spilling over' or 'exploding' into violence. But in West Bengal this has not happened. Strong Bengali consciousness, even when frustrated by institutional decline and provoked by central government intervention, has not produced Bengali separatism. This is clearly an important point since ethnic theories are not our only concern. Deinstitutionalization and central government intervention are two important factors that have been suggested in this study to have caused violent separatism in Jammu and Kashmir. Therefore the role of these factors needs to be disentangled and this will be done in three stages.

The first step is to consider how much Bengali separatism there has actually been. The phenomenon has not been totally absent, but its limited extent is in striking contrast to what we have seen in Tamil Nadu and Jammu and Kashmir. Secondly, it is necessary to discuss the form in which discontent was expressed during some more troublesome periods in West Bengal. In the late 1960s and early 1970s misgovernance was almost as widespread as in Jammu





and Kashmir during the latter half of the 1980s. This question leads to the third step, which is a brief but essential look at the alternative structures that West Bengal has produced to channel discontent in a more orderly manner – i.e. with fewer lost lives and with democratic institutions intact.

### *The insignificance of separatism in West Bengal*

At the time of the outbreak of World War I, Calcutta was the base of various groups of revolutionaries who were together known as the Jugantar Party. The best known of them is Jatin Mukherjee, who organized what is known in the history books of Bengal as the German Conspiracy. The Germans planned for their own strategic purposes to assist Indian revolutionaries as a part of the fight against the British, and preparations were made to support Jatin Mukherjee and the Jugantar party. These plans, however, were discovered by the British, who finally shot Mukherjee and some of his colleagues when they were about to receive a delivery of German arms and other equipments. The objective of the organization was 'an armed revolt to seize control of eastern India.'[42] It seems that the Jugantar Party survived for a while after the death of Jatin Mukherjee, and was again an active, but not a major force, at the time of independence. But integration of the state continued.

At this point, what may be seen as a paradox should be discussed. The Bengali intellectuals emphasized Bengali identity and led the Swadeshi movement. Although Swadeshi lost its momentum around 1917, its impetus continued in the demand for Swaraj – self-determination. The Swaraj movement was more successful on a wider scale and spread to larger parts of India. What may be seen as a contradiction here is that components of a regional resistance movement were transferred to a national one. But this was the logic of revolt in several areas of India. Locally organized resistance to the British and the princely rulers became incorporated in the national movement that gave birth to the new nation. This development also occurred in Jammu and Kashmir.

Separatists today explain Kashmiriyat as an eternal term denoting Kashmir identity. In reality, as was discussed in chapter three, the meaning of Kashmiriyat has changed over time. Protest in Jammu and Kashmir as it was formulated by Sheikh Abdullah and the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference was mainly

anti-British and anti-Dogra. As in West Bengal, the movement came to contribute to Indian nationalism in the sense that it accepted Indian Union as the overall authority structure. Admittedly this was done on the understanding that a plebiscite was to be held about the future of Jammu and Kashmir. Even so, there were similarities between development in Jammu and Kashmir and in West Bengal. Later, however, assertion of the Kashmiri identity would become increasingly synonymous with violent separatism, whereas in West Bengal similar attempts by Jugantar failed. The few seeds of separatism visible today seem frail and are hard to find. In North Calcutta, one can visit the tiny headquarters of the Amra Bengali (We the Bengali), sandwiched between some timber yards.

Amra Bengali is what might be called a Bengali chauvinist party and it is worth mentioning only because it has been so unsuccessful. The origin of Amra Bengali is as shadowy as its present activities but it has competed several times in elections with poor results. Some sources[43] say it has developed from a Congress party offshoot, the Bangla Congress, in the 1960s, while others disagree. But a train ride in North Calcutta will soon reveal traces of this sons-of-the-soils party. On some station signs the names in English and Hindi have been crossed out or smeared with paint, leaving only the Bengali name readable. The message is clearly that Bengali needs to be protected from foreign influences. This party has also been responsible for more extravagant symbolic gestures.[44] The problem for Amra Bengali is, however, that when it has participated in elections it has been one of the least successful parties in West Bengal. In the Lok Sabha election of 1989, its nineteen candidates received as little as 0.2 percent of the votes. It also won no more than 0.2–0.5 percent of the votes in the sixty constituencies it contested in the 1991 State Assembly Election.

Of course we do not know what will become of the Amra Bengali movement in the future, but today its organization is weak. It has no party agenda and when I asked one of its party workers (who wished to remain anonymous) about the party's political ideals, vague references were made to 'economic democracy in India,' which was to be achieved by 'decentralizing the economic decisions to the local people.'

We can at least conclude from this discussion that separatism based on Bengali identity is almost absent in West Bengal. Much of the momentum for Jugantar may have been lost by the partition and the creation of East Pakistan in a similar way that in which





the creation of West Pakistan put a brake on Kashmiri separatism. As mentioned in chapter three, the National Conference had been created as a reaction to the growth of more pro-Pakistani groups in the area. After partition, the National Conference retained some allegiance to the idea of independence but seems to have looked pragmatically at the issue and advocated autonomy within the Indian Union. The paths followed by the two states have diverged dramatically. In West Bengal there are only faint echoes of demands for a separate Bengali state, while in Jammu and Kashmir the resort to violence in pursuit of separatism is what characterizes politics. The story of the absence of separatism in West Bengal defies theories of ethnicity in the sense that a strong regional identity, although an important division, is far from enough to produce separatism. And the story becomes more fascinating if we consider the rough political climate that West Bengal has sometimes experienced.

### *Turbulence, exit and voice in West Bengal*

Although West Bengal has remained overwhelmingly loyal to the Indian Union, the story of the state contains points which help to explain separatism as presented in Jammu and Kashmir.[45] If central government intervention and institutional decline were so important in Jammu and Kashmir, why was not Bengali separatism the outcome of the events in the state during the late 1960s and the early 1970s? Kohli and several other observers have pointed out that West Bengal was one of the most disorderly states in India between 1967 and 1977. The chaos took the form of frequent riots, strikes, and election malpractice. Also, central government intervention was quite extensive in the state. In 1968, and in the midst of strikes and Naxalite[46] violence, the central government arranged the removal of Chief Minister Ajoy Kumar Mukherjee and his leftist United Front Ministry. In 1971, when West Bengal was still in a state of turbulence, with millions of refugees from East Pakistan adding to its problems, Mukherjee, who had again become Chief Minister, allowed the central government to proclaim President's Rule. The 1972 elections were violent and in many places the results were rigged.[47] Subsequently political freedoms were suppressed in Bengal, as in all parts of India, during the Emergency proclaimed by Indira Gandhi which lasted from 1975 to 1977. Thus, West Bengal during this period bears some resemblance to Jammu and

Kashmir during the period 1983 to 1989. What then was the crucial difference between the two states?

To begin with, the historical background of opposition to the Congress party took different forms in the two states. In Jammu and Kashmir the National Conference and the Plebiscite Front had always stood for regional autonomy and the story of the 'unfinished accession' of 1947 could easily be utilised for political leverage by any movement built on discontent. In West Bengal a major part of the opposition to the Congress came from a leftist movement already present at the introduction of democracy.[48] But this was not because the sense of regional identity was any weaker in West Bengal than in Jammu and Kashmir – it means only that Bengali identity was never politicized to the extent that Kashmiri identity was in Jammu and Kashmir. Class was more important in politics. Here we may also notice, hopefully without overstating the obvious, that a class-based ideology does not easily lend itself to the formulation of demands for a separate state, although these remain quite possible.[49] The distribution of the population by class often does not coincide with geographical borders. Central government intervention and weak institutions, however, produced extensive violence in the state, but the leftist parties were the main beneficiaries in terms of support. The role of the leftist forces in West Bengal leads to what I perceive as quite an important difference between developments in Jammu and Kashmir and in West Bengal.

In spite of the excesses of the central government between 1967 and 1977, in West Bengal a crucial channel for discontent remained intact: the CPI(M). In Jammu and Kashmir opposition, or the alternatives for exit and voice, suffered more. As mentioned before, one significant turning point in Jammu and Kashmir came in 1986–1987, when the National Conference made its election cartel with the Congress (I), and finally by 1989 both exit and *voice* were eliminated. In effect, the consequences of the alliance in 1987 were even worse than the act of keeping Sheikh Abdullah in jail for most of the time between 1953 and the early 1970s and the way in which the Congress party took control of the National Conference party for almost twenty years. In spite of all these constraints imposed on the political life in Jammu and Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah, Mirza Afzal Beg and the Plebiscite Front remained a force for opposition. When the National Conference was incorporated in the Congress (I) in 1987, however, this happened with the consent of its leader, Farooq Abdullah, the son





of Sheikh Abdullah, and no other avenues for opposition were allowed to remain open.

In West Bengal, on the other hand, the left-wing parties remained a focal point of opposition during the crises of the late 1960s and the early 1970s. When the emergency was proclaimed, the CPI(M) and the CPI differed in their reactions, which led to very different outcomes in terms of the support they received in the 1977 election, when the emergency was lifted.[50] While the CPI sided with the Congress party and Indira Gandhi, the CPI(M) protested loudly. It seems that the CPI(M) became the main vehicle for expressing discontent and attracted immense support. The support for CPI (M) increased from 27 percent of the votes in 1972, to 36 percent in the 1977 election. The Congress party received 49 percent of the votes and the CPM 8 percent of the votes in the 1972 election. In the 1977 election they received only 23 percent and 3 percent of the votes respectively.[51] The character of the CPI(M) and its role as a channel for discontent seems quite crucial here and we will therefore return to it shortly after a final note on the election of 1977.

In terms of the number of seats won by parties in West Bengal in 1977, we find that the voices of discontent, expressed here as the increased vote for the CPI(M), achieved an overrepresentation in the state Assembly. This is how West Bengal entered the path of stable political development. Before continuing to discuss what this has meant to democracy, it should be noted that the implications of the first-past-the-post system are not always predictable. The 1987 election in Jammu and Kashmir was in many ways as decisive as the election in West Bengal in 1977. In Jammu and Kashmir, even disregarding the effects of rigging, the newly formed opposition party, the MUF, came to be underrepresented in the assembly in terms of number of seats in relation to the number of votes.[52] Election data show that the MUF received at least 20 percent of the votes but won only about 5 percent of the seats in parliament. As was discussed earlier, this outcome may have aggravated discontent with the democratic system. In West Bengal the opposite occurred. The CPI(M) received only 35.8 percent of the votes but this gave about 60 percent of the seats in the state assembly. At times of crisis, the-first-past-the-post system seems to have the capacity to defuse, as well as to radicalize, protest movements.[53] It all depends on the character of the regional representation of the parties, the size of the parties, and the number of contestants for each constituency.

### *The CPI(M) before and after the emergency*

One political scientist who has emphasized that West Bengal is a case of Indian politics showing that development and political stability are possible is Atul Kohli.[54] Kohli shows how the strong and disciplined organization built up by the CPI (M), a creation attributed to its leader Pramode Dasgupta, proved a long-lasting formula for political success and stability that was to be realised by Binoy Chowdhury, the Minister of Land Reforms, and Jyoti Basu, the legendary leader of the CPI(M). Defying local landlords and the clientelist structures, the CPI(M) mobilized the lower classes of the population via the revitalized panchayat system and managed to carry out extensive reforms on behalf of the poor. Kohli shows that in spite of the dangerous drift towards deinstitutionalization and increased problems of governability in India, which together have led to violence, examples can also be found where such a trend has been reversed and democratic stability has been achieved. In other words, the decline of the democratic order can go a long way before a degeneration into violence ultimately becomes unavoidable. But before unquestioningly accepting West Bengal as model for reversing such developments, we must take a brief look at the type of government which has provided stability and how central government intervention has been resisted since 1977. Moreover, recent research questions the success of the land reforms in West Bengal, particularly from the point of view of the poor. It has been argued that the success of the CPI(M) has not been in the popularity of its egalitarian reforms, but in the way in which they have been implemented, and also that the cultural hegemony of the CPI(M) has been no different from feudal dominance in earlier times. I will take this opportunity to summarize the results of this debate in an attempt to show why the central government gave up its intention to intervene and topple the government in West Bengal in the 1980s, an intention which, if carried out, could certainly have destabilized the state again.[55]

Trying to understand the success of the CPI(M) in the late 1970s and the 1980s, the political scientist Dwaipayan Bhattacharyya analyses and evaluates the extent to which land reforms were actually carried out in West Bengal. Bhattacharyya argues that although the CPI(M) leadership announced its extensive plans for reform in the late 1970s, and though impressive redistributions were achieved, land reforms alone cannot explain the party's success. For instance, in some respects the United Front in the late 1960s





implemented land reform more vigorously than the Left Front, and yet the United Front still lost power to the Congress party in 1972. Furthermore, the Left Front's main effort to redistribute land and carry out Operation Barga took place in the first five years of the 1980s, but although there was little further progress after 1985, the Left Front still managed to remain in power.[56] According to Bhattacharyya and other studies to which he refers, the plight of many bargadars (sharecroppers) has not improved, in spite of the land reforms.[57] This decline in the pace of implementation in the 1980s suggests that the CPI(M)'s long period in power, and the high level of political stability which this has produced, are due to the method, rather than the extent, of reform.

When the Left Front initiated Operation Barga, there was a widespread awareness of the tendency of lower bureaucrats to side with the landowners instead of the policy makers. Therefore, in the extensive process of recording bargadars and landowners, 'reorientation camps' and evening meetings were organized where bureaucrats were brought into direct contact with the peasants.

> The camps allegedly were 'great educators' where the officials 'stayed together and ate together with a selection of the poorest villagers.'[58]

The idea was to put the bureaucrat in a 'grindstone' with pressure from above (the party) and below (the peasants). Although the effects of the land reforms may be debated, this direct contact with panchayat leaders and the pressure on bureaucrats seem to have created legitimacy of governance, augmented the popularity of the Left Front, and brought some discipline to the state apparatus.

> The reorientation camps helped the regime in two ways to carry out its own policies. On the one hand, an opportunity came its way to demonstrate its organized strength in the form of the Krishak Sabha and the panchayat to the lower-level officials who allegedly were susceptible to landlords' pressure; and on the other hand, it enabled the government to institute a uniform code of conduct within the bureaucracy, making its own intentions and ideological orientation clear to the state officials.[59]

The connection made by Bhattacharyya between the method of implementation of the reform and the legitimacy of rule should be kept in mind. But there are researchers that go further than Bhattacharyya in de-emphasizing the importance of the land

reforms. Among them is the historian, Arild Engelsen Ruud, who also analyses the success of the CPI(M).

Ruud argues that the present debate on the success of the CPI(M) has focussed far too much on the land reforms, which, he claims, were quite unsuccessful during the UF era when the CPI(M) was radically expanding its support base. In a more detailed discussion on rural households in West Bengal, Ruud shows there was no major reversal of the pattern of land ownership in the state from 1954 to 1972. Instead he suggests that:

> [T]he CPI(M) vis-à-vis the peasantry came to fill a role homologous to that of a patron to his supporters. This implies that the alliance between Marxist and peasants was an exchange of moral and physical support for self-defined interests between unequal but interdependent partners rather than ties based on expectations of near future economic returns.[60]

To take this debate a bit further it is time to mention the actual achievement of the land reforms in West Bengal. The total area of agricultural land vested in the state government under the ceiling provisions of the West Bengal Estate Acquisition Act of 1953 and the West Bengal Land Reforms Act of 1955 was 1,280,000 acres. The land has been transferred with varying degrees of energy by different regimes, but by February 1996, 77 percent, or 982,000 acres, of this land had been distributed to landless peasants. In the process 1,466,000 sharecroppers had been recorded in the records of right and 275,000 poor families had been given the right to this land.[61] This makes land reforms in West Bengal the most extensive in any state in India since independence.

> With barely 5 percent of India's intended beneficiaries, West Bengal's share of actual beneficiaries was as high as 48 percent. While only 5 percent of the intended beneficiaries were actually given land in the country as a whole, in West Bengal the rate is 40 percent.[62]

Bhattacharyya also reminds us to be cautious in dismissing the efforts of the UF government.

> [T]he performance of the United Front, which suffered a premature demise, outshines that of the Left Front /.../ Identification and redistribution of benami land by collective and organised





> initiative of the peasants themselves got the top priority in the United Front's policy agenda. The use of police and the bureaucracy was, therefore, restrained. The regime vested 0.5 million acres in its short tenure (1967–1969) as against less than 0.3 million by the Left Front through its new amendments to the old laws during the thirteen years in government.[63]

If this information is correct the land reforms were more effectively implemented, in some respects including absolute area of land transferred, during the UF-era than under the LF-government.[64] Nevertheless, the relative amount must be considered too. What can 500,000 acres or one million acres of land mean to a population of 44 million?[65] Ruud points out that a family of five needs at least 2.5 acres to sustain itself, and a quick calculation shows that a redistribution of these modest proportions cannot do much to alleviate poverty.[66] So, in that sense Ruud is right, the land reforms might not explain the popularity of the CPI(M) if we consider only the short term material benefit to the voters. However, I would not go so far as to describe the CPI(M) land reforms as being mere clientelism in 'new clothes'. There are two reasons for this.

First, any real progress in attacking poverty in India has to be taken seriously although reforms in India may appear limited in size when total population numbers are considered. Although reforms may not bring radical change overnight, or even for decades, we should be wary in assuming that the voter always takes a very narrow view of political issues. It is not certain that the voter performs like a simplified version of *economic man*, concerned only with short-term economic returns, or that he/she inevitably yields to pressure by various patrons, just because we do not see the immediate material gain or outcome. Some voters may in fact take a broader view of developments, and I would argue that it is fair to assume, until the opposite is proven, that although redistribution has not been revolutionary in scale, voters take seriously and value the small change that the CPI(M) has managed to bring about.[67] Furthermore, land reforms in West Bengal are also significant in that they have meant a shift in power away from landlords and towards the CPI(M) and, to some extent, the poor.

On the other hand, this leads an observer to ask why land reforms did not create legitimacy and stability in Jammu and Kashmir during Sheikh Abdullah's rule? A reply to this argument is offered by Bhattacharyya. In West Bengal, during Operation Barga, state bureaucrats co-operated closely with local officials and the

peasants actually concerned. Bhattacharyya makes the convincing point that the *way* the policies of the Left Front were implemented, rather than the policies themselves, ensured continued support, even when the pace of land reform slowed down in the 1980s. Thus the legitimacy of the state insititutions was restored in West Bengal from 1977 onwards. In Jammu and Kashmir the reforms of the 1950s were introduced in a relatively undemocratic context and depended on the 'whims of the ruler.' The reforms which led to a redistribution of 230,000 acres in the years up to 1953 undoubtedly helped to provide legitimacy for Sheikh Abdullah's rule.[68] But that may have been as far as it went – it provided legitimacy for a personal rule, but any stability and legitimacy that the reforms may have lent to the central government were probably lost when Abdullah was sent to jail.

Secondly, although the power relationship between the farmers and the CPI(M) leaders in West Bengal is an unequal one, I would not go so far as to say that CPI(M) is just a new patron in new clothes. There is, I would argue, a significant difference between benefits provided by democratically elected rulers and those provided by an autocratic ruler who has never stood in a fair election. If all the individuals engaged in redistribution of wealth are to be called patrons, almost all reforms aimed at redistribution of wealth must be labelled clientelism, in which case these terms obviously lose something crucial of their meaning. My position is that the principle involved makes a significant difference. If at least an attempt is made to redistribute land according on a universalistic principle, the system is less clientelistic than when redistribution of wealth is in the hands of a single patron.

However, I do think Ruud has an important point in his analysis when he refers to the extent to which the CPI(M) has taken over the previous domination of the Congress party. It is fair to say that the CPI(M) has come to exercise a certain political hegemony, and in several areas of West Bengal there is no competitor with its extraordinary influence. However, this strength has certainly altered the cost-benefit equation for any decision maker in the central government considering political intervention in the state. This is the final point to be made in this discussion of developments in West Bengal.

### *How to resist Central Government intervention*

There are three key elements in the continued stability of West Bengal in the 1980s. Kohli points out the importance of a well-





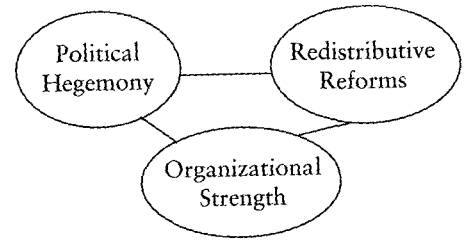


Figure 5.3

organized party and at least relatively successful reform in favour of the poor. Bhattacharyya reinforces this argument when he describes the way in which the reforms were carried out and the legitimacy which the government derived from this. Finally, Ruud's emphasis on the great influence of the CPI(M) and its allies adds to our understanding of the breadth of the control and great organizational strength of the leftist forces in the state.

Metaphorically, one could speak of three pillars (Figure 5.3) that make the CPI(M) such a strong alternative to the Congress party, namely: political hegemony, redistributive reforms, and organizational strength. This is not to say that the total domination of one party or of a block of leftist parties is desirable – which it certainly is not from a democratic perspective. But it seems that the striking domination of the leftist forces has been a necessary counterweight to the dominance of the party in power at the centre – the Congress party. If the CPI(M) and the Left Front had not managed to strengthen their influence, it is quite likely that the central government could have returned to the interventionist policies it pursued during the UF era. This argument can be further substantiated if we recall the increased interventionist tendencies of the central government in the 1980s and the strong reaction that these provoked in regional parties in the states.

In the 1980s, as mentioned in chapter four, a nation-wide coalition, the Opposition Conclave, was formed with the objective of establishing an alternative to the Congress (I) based on regional party power and resisting the increasing tendency of the central government to intervene in democratically elected state governments. The Conclave held a meeting in Calcutta in January 1984, before Indira Gandhi's death, which discussed State-Centre relations and the problem of attempts by the central government to overturn

opposition governments in, among other states, Jammu and Kashmir and West Bengal. In an interview with the former Chief Minister Jyoti Basu, I referred to that period and asked how the government of West Bengal managed to resist attempts to intervene during the 1980s, whereas the Jammu and Kashmir government did not? Basu's reply was that the Centre no longer dared bring down the Left Front government in West Bengal because it was too strong.

> We had a very large majority. But in Jammu and Kashmir the National Conference was divided and so Indira Gandhi could buy off those two[69] MLAs in 1984. In West Bengal no such thing was possible. But I told Mrs. Gandhi she should not intervene in Jammu and Kashmir. Farooq Abdullah was democratically elected and he was all for India in his politics, but she simply did not like him and that's why she bought those MLAs.[70]

The split in the National Conference that appeared after the death of Sheikh Abdullah was a weakness that was soon exploited by the central government. No such cracks were to be found in the Left Front in the 1980s. Basu also recalls that N.T. Rama Rao was removed as Chief Minister in Andhra Pradesh not long after the meeting 'but then we all protested and put pressure on the central government and finally he was reinstalled. In West Bengal they would never have dared to try such a thing.'

The strength of the CPI(M) organization obviously played a big part in making it possible to carry out reforms and resist central government intervention. This has, notwithstanding the problems that any democracy must be expected to face, made politics in West Bengal more stable and less prone to violence.

## Conclusion

The analysis of Tamil Nadu and West Bengal is intended to illustrate the arguments and hypotheses concerning Jammu and Kashmir. The idea is to place a more detailed study in a broader context and thus stimulate the debate on democratic development and the causes of separatist violence. The political scientist Ashutosh Varshney has depicted the rise of violence in Jammu and Kashmir as a problem of competing nationalisms.[71] Although it is true that the competition between nationalisms to which Varshney refers may be considered a necessary factor in the explanation of separatist violence, it is not a sufficient one. All three states have had competing forms of nationalism, or the cultural preconditions





that can lend themselves to separatism, at least according to the theories on ethnicity which have been discussed. In Jammu and Kashmir the cultural prerequisite is represented by Kashmiriyat, in Tamil Nadu by the demand for Dravida Nadu, and in West Bengal by a strong Bengali esprit. But Tamil Nadu never produced separatist violence on the scale of Jammu and Kashmir, and the Bengali identity has not yet led to a separatist movement in West Bengal, so something more is needed if we are to explain the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir. Therefore, the conclusion of this study is that culture and identity *per se* are neutral, and act as a vehicle rather than a cause of political conflict.[72] In order for polarization to occur effectively and on a large scale between groups in society, a political elite pursuing certain policies is needed. Whether this elite is aware of the fact that it is creating polarization is irrelevant. For strong polarization to take place there has to be real discontent among the citizens. Otherwise mobilization on ethnic lines may fall flat, as it did in Jammu and Kashmir in the early 1980s. There are, however, other factors that should be mentioned. For example, is it not possible that Jammu and Kashmir has been markedly poorer than Tamil Nadu and West Bengal?[73]

Poor socioeconomic conditions may certainly be enough to create violent conflict, but as previously mentioned, the objective here is not to try to 'eliminate' such explanations on a general level. Although economic conditions in the three states discussed here are not adequately investigated or systematically compared in this chapter, the point may still be made that there is no immediate or obvious evidence that the absence or presence of violent separatism is related to high or low economic productivity. None of the three states are 'economic success stories' that remotely approach, for example, Punjab, in terms of economic development. Nevertheless, it is clear that West Bengal has fared better than Tamil Nadu and Jammu and Kashmir if we look at the per capita net domestic product in the states since the 1960s. As for per capita income, however, Jammu and Kashmir comes between Tamil Nadu and West Bengal in 1981, and if we also consider the percentage of the population below the poverty line conditions are worse in both West Bengal and Tamil Nadu from the late 1970s onwards. With regard to other socioeconomic factors, the pattern remains mixed. Although the literacy rate in Jammu and Kashmir is lower than in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, the infant mortality rate is higher in both Tamil Nadu and West Bengal than in Jammu and Kashmir.[74] This may be connected to the fact that the number of doctors in Jammu

and Kashmir has risen significantly between the mid-1970s and the early 1990s. Although data on unemployment are meagre, there are at least no indications that Jammu and Kashmir has suffered more than other states in the 1980s.[75]

Redistribution of resources, however, may play an important part in creating political stability. In West Bengal land reforms seem to have given the West Bengal government and its bureaucracy legitimacy. Kohli refers to other areas where the Bengali Left Front government has been relatively successful in implementing reforms for the benefit of the poor.[76] But, as Bhattacharyya and Ruud point out, although the reforms of the Left Front may not have been on a revolutionary scale, the CPI(M) provided something more. A central theme in Bhattacharyya's analysis is that the *way* reforms were implemented gave the CPI(M) rule its legitimacy, while the cultural hegemony discussed by Ruud probably added to stability.[77] These factors together have, it seems, transformed into the much-needed legitimacy at least at the state level. It may also have helped the nation-building process in more general terms. And at this stage of the discussion we are slowly moving into the realm of political factors that may not at all be determined by economic conditions.

In spite of political turbulence in West Bengal in the 1960s and 1970s, the fact that some channels for exit and voice survived, which enabled the path to stable politics to be followed. The situation in West Bengal stabilized, as what could be called a *virtuous cycle of reforms* ensued. In Tamil Nadu separatism was finally curbed although the central government came dangerously close to providing an excuse for the growth of violent separatist movements. It should be remembered that the demand for Dravida Nadu, spearheaded by the DMK, was more widely supported in the 1950s in Tamil Nadu than the demand for accession to Pakistan advocated by the Jamaat-e-Islami in Jammu and Kashmir in the late 1970s and early 1980s. However, in Tamil Nadu the central government always left the channels for voice and exit open, even when discontent took its most populist forms. When the language riots broke out in 1965, the central government made concessions and further clashes were avoided. Although after the 1960s the Congress party had to rely on alternating alliances with one or other of the two main parties competing for power in Tamil Nadu, it never attempted to co-opt all major opposition forces in the state. That may sound like an unlikely scenario but it is what happened in Jammu and Kashmir in 1987–1989. Therefore,





disenchantment with democracy in Tamil Nadu never reached the level it did Jammu and Kashmir.

In Jammu and Kashmir most democratic institutions suffered from 1982 onwards. The National Conference was weakened, the central government intervened, elections were corrupted, and finally all avenues for exit and voice were closed. And, as Hirschman and Rokkan warn, when both avenues are closed in a system it becomes unstable. The question to be answered in the next chapter is how far outside Kashmir this instability threatens to spread.

# 6

# 'THE MOST DANGEROUS PLACE IN THE WORLD'

When violence broke out in Kashmir in the late 1980s and early 1990s the Western media wrote little about it or followed the events mostly sporadically. However, in 1998 on 11 and 13 May when India carried out its nuclear tests, followed by Pakistan's nuclear test 28 May, the world's attention was caught. Economic sanctions were imposed on both India and Pakistan but this neither decreased tension between the two antagonists, nor did it reduce the incentives for continuing to develop nuclear arms and missile systems with which to deliver them. Fighting along the Line of Control in Kashmir grew in the summer, and one year later the Kargil war was fought. The National Intelligence Estimate, compiled by the CIA and other US intelligence organisations, concluded afterwards that 'there was a sharply increased chance of non-nuclear military conflict between India and Pakistan, possibly erupting into a nuclear exchange'.[1] This is why President Clinton made the statement that the Indian sub-continent is 'the most dangerous place in the world'. Although the political actors in the sub-continent have proved they have the means for carrying out a nuclear war, is it realistic to think that the conflict in Kashmir could reach that point?

The threat of nuclear war is played down by both researchers studying international relations and by political actors in the conflict. For example, the Indian President Kocheril Raman Narayanan dismissed Clinton's comment as 'alarmist' and some political scientists argue that the nuclear arms should mainly be seen as tools used by these governments for 'increasing their political capital'.[2] We recognize this line of argumentation from the cold war. It is based on the assumption that 'no one is crazy enough to start a nuclear war since everyone in it would lose more than they would gain'. Moreover, Brajesh Mishra, an influential security





adviser for the BJP government, who presented the draft for a new nuclear doctrine in 1999, said that the presence of nuclear arms would drastically lower the incentives for going to war with conventional means. The mere possibility of a nuclear war as the final outcome would make any nation think twice before embarking on any kind of offensive military campaign. The nation Mishra had in mind, without mentioning its name, was naturally Pakistan and the Line of Control in Kashmir was the case in point. But the threat of nuclear war cannot be dismissed that easily.

The British journalist Martin Wollacott has argued that the fact that both India and Pakistan posseses nuclear arms was perhaps the crucial reason why Pakistan embarked on the Kargil offensive in 1999. In his argumentation he proposed that, since nuclear arms were available as a final resort, the Pakistani government calculated that the Indian government would let Pakistan get away with far more offensive activities in Kashmir since they would, at any price, want to avoid a nuclear confrontation.

It is possible to come to opposite conclusions regarding the influence of nuclear weapons on security issues. We should expect that political leaders can argue in a variety of ways when it comes to the risk of nuclear war. To complicate matters further, motives and incentives in this conflict are very difficult to assess since the tone of voice in communications between the two parties is highly charged with antagonism and intermingled with confusing metaphors about ethnic nationalism. This needs to be discussed more in detail and this chapter will try to shed light on some of the factors that are important if one wants to examine what may cause 'the war nobody wants'. It will also provide an opportunity to recapitulate simply important events regarding the Kashmir conflicts in the 1990s and the year 2000. In this connection, the main argument to be presented is that the greatest risk of large-scale war between India and Pakistan, where the possibilities of using nuclear arms appear as a not too remote option, may emerge from the political logic that produced the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir in the late 1980s. Some important contributions from the field of war studies in combination with theoretical postulates about rationality in politics will be our departure point for this argument.

## Going to war by accident

Neither Pakistan nor India wants a nuclear confrontation. That these two nations acquired nuclear arms is quite understandable if

one takes into consideration the history of hostilities between the two countries, and the availability of technology and resources for creating such weapons. Acquiring nuclear arms was motivated on both sides by the fact that the enemy might have the capacity and motives to acquire them. The objective would primarily be to create deterrence so that the enemy would not use such weapons. However, even if the nuclear arms have been acquired with a sincerely held intention of never making use of them, as long as they exist there is always a chance that they will be employed in an unforseen situation. It is impossible to express this risk by numbers and ratios of likelihood. We may have to settle for trying to determine if the risk of nuclear war should be seen as something which is closer to 'negligible' or more towards 'high'. To do so we need to examine if there are some scenarios of conflict growth that could be considered as plausible and that finally could involve the use of nuclear arms. In this process we will explore, to paraphrase a number of authors in the field of war studies, when the *unthinkable* may become *thinkable*.

In the following discussions it will mainly be the combination of distrust and lack of reliable information about the actions and intentions of the counterpart that will be examined. The role of arguments and metaphors referring to ethnic nationalism in crisis situations will also be discussed. In arguing that the greatest risk of a large-scale war in the sub-continent may originate in a dynamic similar to the one that led to the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir in the 1980s, one should recall some of the main arguments presented in chapter four. The ethnic polarisation and the violent separatism in Kashmir at the end of the 1980s was the unforseen outcome of political decisions taken with entirely different goals in mind. For example, when Indira Gandhi dismissed Farooq Abdullah in 1984, or when Rajiv Gandhi and Farooq Abdullah entered the election cartel in 1986, they did not aim at creating violent separatism in Jammu and Kashmir. They aimed at political power. The outcome however was violence. Ambitions of power on the international arena can, in a similar fashion, produce unforseen events such as armed conflicts, but then on a much larger scale. A situation with high levels of distrust and poor intelligence sources, which leaves decision-makers guessing what the counterpart is up to, is highly risky. Why this particular mix of factors is so volatile also at the international level becomes clear from reading Ned Lebow on conflicts, and Graham T. Allison on rationality.





Lebow's classic contribution to the field of conflict studies, *Between Peace and War,* makes a classification of different types of crisis in international relations. The likelihood of war is strongly affected by what category a crisis belongs to. A crisis may be brought about by the fact that a state wants to initiate a conflict, it can be a spinoff effect from another conflict, or it can be caused by some kind of brinkmanship game that is carried out by some states where a war is not necessarily desired, but where the threat of one is the means or the key to achieving a political goal. The way the Kashmir conflict has already once grown to an interstate conflict between India and Pakistan in 1999 resembles both what Lebow describes as a spinoff crisis and a brinkmanship situation. He stresses the important role played by information for the outcome in such crises. The outcome can be determined by distortions in information, how information is perceived by the political leaders, and the level of trust among the political actors. The most fascinating and tragic example is perhaps the July 1914 crisis which led to the first world war. The conclusion from Lebow's arguments is that the war could have been avoided. Several political decision-makers did not want what followed from their actions (although some actors were more easily inclined to involve themselves in armed battle than others, and some even aimed at achieving conflagration).[3] Some of the decision- makers in Germany supported Austria-Hungary in going to war with Serbia, convinced that the conflict would be 'localized'. Since key subordinates in the decision-making hierarchy distorted or withheld information sent to Berlin, Kaiser Wilhelm considered it unlikely that the conflict would escalate to the point where France and Russia would intervene and he was certain that Britain would not. Studying sources of disinformation and how leaders are motivated to filter information is the key to understanding the first world war according to Lebow, and this also highly relevant when discussing conflict scenarios involving India and Pakistan.

The dilemma in South Asia is that its leaders may end up in a situation that they had not predicted and therefore they may have to make decisions they did not desire at the onset of a crisis. From a more theoretical perspective, this is one of the key topics of research in the field of studies on rationalism in politics. I will mainly use the excellent contribution Graham Allison made to this field in the early 1970s.

In his study of the Cuban missile crisis, Allison uses three theoretical approaches to explain what almost led to the third world

war: the rational actor model, organisational theory, and the governmental politics model. All models that Allison draws from have unique approaches; none of them can alone explain what happened, but when they are added together the explanation is complete. The critique against the rational actor model, which the bulk of theories in political science are based on today, is of particular interest here. Allison criticises a rational actor model that claims to have explained the crisis 'as if it were simply describing the process of governmental reasoning, choice, and implementation'.[4] Here we clearly recognize the general conclusions about the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir. A more complete view is only achieved by looking at political events 'less as deliberate choices and more as *outputs* of large organizations' and studying the 'pulling and hauling that is politics'.[5] Naturally the rational actor model referred to by Allison is not the equivalent to today's more sophisticated rational choice and game theoretical models developed by, for example, George Tsebelis, who describes complex political situations as 'nested games'.[6] Nevertheless, the simplified rational actor theory that Allison criticizes – that assumes that 'international events can be explained by recounting the aims and calculations of nations and governments' – should be remembered since it is really quite often assumed, often unconsciously, by many political scientists and, even more important and more dangerous, by politicians. If, for example, an observer of international relations assumes that the risk of nuclear war is negligible since 'nobody wants it,' it is also assumed that such a desire is automatically transformed to choices, and reflected in policies that will be effectively implemented. History, however, shows what Lebow makes so clear in his conflict studies, namely that what politicians aim for can be quite different from the outcome. And this is the dilemma for security development in South Asia. A recapitulation of the events in the region during the the 1990s and the beginning of 2000 will show where the insecurities stem from that could lead to undesired and fatal outcomes in South Asian politics.

## The Kashmir Conflict 1990–2000

Large-scale violence erupted at the end of 1989, and at the beginning of 1990 it was predicted that the 'Kashmir uprising' would soon 'blow over'. But the opposite occurred and Kashmir entered a deep spiral of violence. The fighting in Jammu and Kashmir in the 1990s was clearly caused by the events described in chapter four.



Still, the dynamic that drove the conflict during the last decade of the century gradually loosened its connection to the original causes. The further we move into the 1990s, the more we see how violence feeds mainly on violence and brutalities committed by separatists and the Indian security and military forces in Kashmir. Almost no signs of de-escalation occurred in the 1990s. Instead, the conflict slowly spread, and caused more and more antagonism between India and Pakistan.

### *Conflict trends in Jammu and Kashmir 1990–1998*

Without going into all the details of fighting in the state and the various crises it has brought, the development 1990–1998 can be summarized under four heads.

(1) The first striking feature that appears in an overview of the developments in Jammu and Kashmir during this period is that none of the national or regional political forces was able to break the spiral of violence. Neither Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah, nor the governors – Jagmohan, Girish Saxena, and Krishna Rao – managed significantly to decrease the level of fighting over a period of ten years. Also, during the 1990s none of the various governments in New Delhi – Janata Dal, Congress (I) or BJP – managed to open a constructive dialogue or significantly reduce tension in the conflict. The fighting continued all through the 1990s.

Between 1989 and 1996 about 25 000 people died in the conflict.[7] The total number of deaths by the end of 2000 may well exceed 30,000. For a brief moment it looked as if some progress was made when President's Rule was lifted after six years and Farooq Abdullah and the National Conference was installed as the 'democratically elected' government in October 1996.[8] For a while the level of violence seemed to drop, but the situation deteriorated from 25 January 1998 when 23 Pandits were assassinated in Wandhama, a part of Farooq Abdullah's own constituency, the day before the Indian Republic Day. The symbolic message was clear: Abdullah and the Indian Union Government had not managed to restore its control in Kashmir. After this, some observers claim, the conflict entered a phase of violence hitherto unsurpassed.

(2) Secondly, the main uniting factor for the separatists during this period was clearly one common enemy – the Indian Union and its government. Looking beneath this surface we find that the separatists are divided in several ways. One source of division concerns the goal of Kashmir becoming a part of Pakistan. The

umbrella organisation for the separatists in Jammu and Kashmir, the All Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) contains several supporters for this position although the official position is more vague and mostly refers to the demand for a plebiscite on the issue. The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front supports, as was mentioned in chapter four, Kashmir becoming an independent state. The JKLF, the Hurriyat, and the Jamaat-i-Islami have all had problems with internal rivalry concerning leadership, which we will return to several times below. Another source of division is the separatists' different main recruiting bases and origins. The Hurriyat, the JKLF and Hizbul Mujahedin are based in Jammu and Kashmir, while the Harkat-ul-Ansar and Lashkar-e-Toiba have recruited most of their members from Pakistan and Afghanistan. This line of division is substantial and has created much internal tension in the separatist movement. Finally, there has been reported some internal rivalry between the dominant Sunni and the minority Shia groups in the Hurriyat.

(3) Thirdly, crudely summarized, the military and political initiative the Indian based separatist organisations had in the early 1990s has gradually been overtaken by the Pakistan- and Afghanistan-based organisations. Often the latter groups are referred to as 'foreign' in Jammu and Kashmir, as they rarely speak the same language as the Kashmiri Muslims on the Indian side. Although information about the 'foreign groups' is difficult to verify, it seems that the Harkat-ul-Ansar (a.k.a. Harkat-ul-Mujahedin) is one of the strongest in this category operating in Jammu and Kashmir.[9] There also appears to be a connection between the Harkat-ul-Ansar, the previously mentioned Lashkar-e-Toiba, and the Al Faran.[10] The JKLF and the Hizbul Mujahedin, both of which mainly recruited their members from the Indian side, have met different fates. The JKLF, which was one of the most important organisations in the 1980s and early 1990s, is considered by many to be defunct today. Internal rivalry among the commanders of the organisation based in Pakistan and the commanders based in Jammu and Kashmir was one of the causes of the decline. The Hizbul Mujahedin on the other hand is still powerful but it is becoming more politically influenced by Pakistan.

(4) Finally, during the 1990s no third party was allowed to mediate in the conflict. India in particular has shown distrust towards Western powers that have made offers to facilitate talks. This is probably caused by three factors. First, since 1947 the Indian governments have felt that they have not received proper





support for their position on Kashmir in international fora such as the UN. Second, mediation has been seen as unnecessary as India clearly will not negotiate about giving any part of Kashmir to Pakistan. Pakistan has been equally clear about not 'returning' what it took control of in the war in 1947. Third, Kashmir is a matter of national prestige. Allowing a third party mediator would be seen as a defeat: admitting that 'India has not been able to handle its own problems'.

While India has firmly rejected the idea of any third-party mediator, Pakistan has welcomed it. Most likely, however, Pakistan has done so convinced that India would reject such proposals. Pakistan has therefore been able to increase its political capital at the cost of India's.

The trend in the 1990s is discouraging mainly because there are so few indications of developments that could lead to a de-escalation of the conflict. In fact, there were almost none until June 2000. Before we look at what happened then, we shall first briefly examine what happened concerning Indo-Pakistani relations at the end of the 1990s. In particular, we shall look closely at the intensifying missile and nuclear arms race.

### *The proliferation of the Kashmir conflict 1998–2000*

When the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir intensified in 1990, tension increased rapidly between India and Pakistan. According to some sources American intelligence services were convinced that a nuclear war was imminent between the two countries and diplomatic pressure was utilised to defuse some of the tension.[11] In an interview carried out by the journalist Seymour Hersh, Richard J. Kerr, who was the deputy director of the CIA in 1990, stated that, 'It was the most dangerous nuclear situation we have ever faced since I've been in the U.S. government. It may be as close as we've come to a nuclear exchange. It was far more frightening than the Cuban missile crisis'.[12] President Bush sent one of his security advisers to Islamabad and New Delhi to 'negotiate a stand-down'. Since then for most of the 1990s, confrontations between India's and Pakistan's armed forces has been confined to skirmishes and artillery duels along the Line of Control. Although Indo-Pakistani relations did not improve and although fighting in Kashmir continued with increased support from Pakistan-based organisations, the risk of war between the two countries did not seem to increase. This changed after the nuclear tests in 1998. It began with a change

of government in New Delhi the same year. To understand how this political course was taken we need briefly to recall what happened to the previous government.

Prime Minister Narasimha Rao and the Congress (I) managed to do two things no one predicted when they formed the government after the 1991 election. First, they managed to stay in power for the full five-year term, although it was a shaky minority government.[13] Secondly, extensive and to some extent effective economic liberalisation reforms were carried out at the beginning of Rao's term in office. If these can be considered as successful achievements, Rao's government was, however, less successful at handling communal tensions.

In December 1992 political and religious activists associated with the BJP attacked and tore down the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya. The mosque, built in the 16th century, was placed on a spot claimed by Hindus to be the birthplace of Lord Rama and the site of a Hindu temple. For a long time the mosque had been closed but in 1986, under Rajiv Gandhi's term in office, it was reopened. In reaction, the BJP and its cadre organisations made the 'restoration of the temple' one of its main rallying points, which drew increasingly strong support in India. A protest march led by the BJP to the mosque in Ayodhya was one of the reasons that the Janata Dal government fell in 1990. After several more marches and rallies in Ayodhya the mosque was finally destroyed in 1992. Many political observers expected that the Congress (I) government would defend the 'secular ideology'of the party and restore the mosque. But Rao was unable to find a solution to this crisis, and today the mosque is still in ruins while most parts of the planned Hindu temple are finished and ready to be assembled on the controversial spot. As a consequence Hindu-Muslim tensions have increased in India. In Kashmir, the destruction of the mosque led to further support for the demand of a separate state or joining Pakistan.

Besides the failure on communal relations, Rao's government was also tainted by a number of corruption scandals and it was unable to provide a clear alternative to the BJP's Hindu politico-religious ideology for the Indian electorate. When the votes had been counted after the election in 1996, the Congress (I) was no longer the party with the largest number of seats in the parliament. After some political turbulence, where the BJP did not manage to get strong enough support for forming a government and other opposition forces to the Congress (I) failed to provide any stable alternatives for government, new elections were held in February





and March 1998, which gave the BJP its first real opportunity to take the seat of power. The BJP managed to assemble a minority government, but it had to rely on the support of a large number of parties. Moreover, it had severe problems with securing the support of one of its strongest allies, the AIADMK in Tamil Nadu. When the government was a month old the AIADMK and its party president Jayalalitha Jayaram threatened to withdraw its support, which would have made the BJP government fall if a vote of confidence had been called for. Jayalalitha Jayaram demanded the rearrangement of key portfolios in the government and that the DMK, the main opponent to the AIADMK in power in Tamil Nadu (see chapter five), should be dismissed by the central government. These demands were impossible for the BJP to meet and for a while it seemed that the Vajpayee government was on its way out. The nuclear tests carried out by India on 11 and 13 May changed that.

The nuclear tests carried out by India and Pakistan came as a surprise to most Western observers. The news about the tests was accompanied by reports of a 'nationalistic frenzy' released in India and Pakistan. The reports were illustrated with scenes of celebrations in the streets of Lahore and New Delhi. But the tests did not come a surprise to some of those who follow politics in South Asia. Much of what happened had been clearly expressed in the BJP's election manifesto in 1996 and 1998, and only a month before the tests were carried out, the by-weekly magazine *Frontline* ran a special issue on India's nuclear programme and the BJP's nuclear policy, where the journalist John Cherian began the leading article with the following words.

> The Bharatiya Janata Party and its earlier incarnation, the Jan Sangh, have consistently advocated a hawkish line on matters of national security, particularly nuclear-related issues. Possessing the 'bomb' is an article of faith with the party that now heads a coalition Government at the Centre. Nuclear weapons have always been viewed as a 'currency of power' and the 'ultimate weapon' by the BJP and a group of hawks on strategic issues whose contributions to the nuclear debate in India have had more than their fair share of play in the media. The BJP, now in power, finds it difficult to live down its hardline pronouncements of the past. ... A coherent government policy on the nuclear issue is yet to emerge. Within the security establishment, there are some people who demand that nuclear weapons tests be held; others see no pressing need to do so at this juncture. Those who favour nuclear tests say that is the only way to have a credible deterrent capability. They

argue that no option can be kept open indefinitely and that India cannot forever remain on the 'nuclear threshold'.[14]

Nonetheless, those who expected tests to be carried out had difficulties in predicting when. The crisis created by AIADMK, however, provided the perfect opportunity – although the Indian Prime Minister claimed that the nuclear tests were made in response to the test of the ballistic missile 'Ghauri' carried out by Pakistan 6 April.

There was a wave of euphoria, in particular in the larger cities, but it soon passed and the main political issue only a few months later was the 'Onion Crisis' and the heavy price increases on other essential commodities. Issues relating to hikes of food prices had such a strong impact that the BJP lost several important state assembly elections in November-December 1998. As many political commentators pointed out, the wave of support for Indira Gandhi was just as short-lived after India's first nuclear test that was carried out in 1974. After the first test there was a short wave of support only to be followed by the emergency that reflected the crisis of governance. If, however, the BJP government was saved for the moment, India's relations to its neighbours were not.

Many foreign countries condemned the tests and economic sanctions on India and Pakistan were imposed. For India, the tests also brought on a minor crisis in its relation to China, since the new Minister of Defence, George Fernandes, had claimed before the tests that it was not Pakistan, but China that was India's 'enemy number one'. It was however the relationship with Pakistan that naturally suffered the most. Tension inside the Valley had already begun to build up during the spring and the tests caused the conflict to spill across the border.

Farooq Abdullah's position had gradually weakened in Jammu and Kashmir and was no further improved when, in the spring of 1998, he began cooperating on the national level with the BJP. In the state the Hurriyat reacted by electing Ali Shah Geelani as its leader, the strongest proponent of the position that Kashmir should become a part of Pakistan. While the elites consolidated their cooperation on the national level, tension increased on the ground. In a way the pattern from 1986/87 was repeated when the 'election cartel' between Rajiv Gandhi and Farooq Abdullah was created. The cartel, described in chapter four, robbed the democratic system in Jammu and Kashmir of its legitimacy. In 1998, elite co-operation had no positive effects on the ground level either. The Home Minster Lal Krishna Advani pursued a strong antagonistic line





towards Kashmiri separatist forces, he used a highly aggressive tone towards Pakistan, and he also asked George Fernandes to cancel a planned talk with Geelani. The hard-line position taken by Advani was most likely primarily an attempt to evoke popular support for the BJP, but it naturally also affected the political climate in Jammu and Kashmir and the relationship between India and Pakistan. In May the number of border crossings in Kashmir were reported to be the highest ever.[15] Violence spread in Jammu and Kashmir to Rajauri, Poonch, and Udhampur and the summer that followed was perhaps the most violent so far during the 1990s.

Firing across the border at various points along the Line of Control increased in May after the tests were carried out and peaked in July, around the time when India's prime minister was meeting his Pakistani counterpart in Colombo. According to some observers, the extent of artillery firing exceeded any other since 1971. About 150 civilian casualties followed from the fighting, that lasted until end of the summer.[16] In February 1999, however, the BJP managed to improve its relation with Pakistan at least for a short while. Atal Bihari Vajpaye took the bus on a newly re-opened line to Lahore to visit Nawaz Sharif. Nonetheless, although a 'Lahore Declaration' was produced nothing substantial resulted from the meeting that could significantly reduce tension. Bilateral talks again failed to bring a solution to the Kashmir conflict.

In the following spring the BJP government made it clear that it would continue to pursue what John Cherian referred to above as the 'hawkish line on matters of national security'. The motive for this may have been to create stronger public support for the severely weakened government rather than important changes in the security situation between India and Pakistan. On 11 April India tested the Agni II missile outside Orissa, and George Fernandes proudly declared that India had reached a point where 'no one would dare to threaten it'. This event, however, did not re-create the euphoria of the 1998 nuclear tests. The effect it had on Pakistan's government was more certain. The leaders in Pakistan obviously felt it was under pressure to show the public and the political elite that it also was capable of maintaining a hard-line position. A few days after the Agni II test, Pakistan answered by testing its Ghauri II missile. Clearly missile technology has taken a central part in the arms race in South Asia today. Although fairly simple in design, the Ghauri missile permits Pakistan to reach most targets in India,[17] India's missile programme, however, is far more sophisticated and one reason for this is that India has pursued an

advanced space programme along with its missile programme. India's Agni missile has a range that allows it to reach targets in most parts of China and its short distance missiles such as the Prithvi are of more advanced design than anything with similar range possessed by Pakistan. Consequently, India is in effect entering an arms race with China. But it was the relationship with Pakistan that soon went from 'tense' to open conflict.

On 5 May 1999 the Indian army discovered a group of separatists in the Kargil area who apparently had come in from Azad Kashmir. Their presence was a surprise to the Indian army to almost the same extent that the nuclear tests were a surprise to the Western media and intelligence services. What was odd about the 'intruders' was that they appeared in a place uncommonly used by separatists entering India from Pakistan. A army patrol that was sent to the spot was ambushed, and air surveillance discovered on 12 May that around 500 separatists had taken positions 'atop the ridges facing Dras, Kargil, Batalik and the Mushko Valley'.[18] It seemed that the men occupying the ridges were not the regular separatists who would usually cross the border to get in or out of the Valley. At least their objectives were different. The Indian Lt-General Krishan Pal observed that '[t]hey seemed to have a specific plan and had stocked adequate supplies of arms and ammunition and ration'. It seems, however, that Pal misjudged how serious the intrusion was, claiming that the 'situation was local and would be dealt with locally'.[19] The Indian Army initiated a campaign to recapture the areas held by the separatists, but the difficult terrain called for extensive military support and soon the Kargil crisis grew to the extent that this may be referred to as the fourth Indo-Pakistani war.

At this time the government in India was yet again in a fragile position. Although they had hoped for an increase in political sympathies after the Agni test, Atal Bihari Vaypajyee, the BJP and its allies lost support in parliament in late April after the AIADMK had finally made its withdrawal. The BJP was now in charge of a caretaker government waiting for elections to be held after the summer. In June, India moved one army division and some artillery to the area and initiated air strikes against its enemy. When the 'intruders' managed to shoot down at least one of two Indian Air Force fighters that were lost in operations in the area, and one Indian helicopter, the threat of nuclear war suddenly seemed to be a not too far-fetched outcome to the conflict. Later in the same month the Indian army continued to try to push back forces along





the Mashkoh Valley, Drass, Kaksar and the Batalik sector. In the meantime the government in Pakistan was heavily criticised in international fora, although it defended itself saying that the separatists had no connection to the Pakistan government. They were 'acting on their own'.

Later it became quite clear this was not completely true, and Nawaz Sharif used some ethno-nationalist metaphors to conceal the facts. During the Kargil war he portrayed the forces operating on the Indian-controlled side as 'autonomous forces'. He also used a metaphor where the 'uprising' in Kashmir was described as a 'volcano' and the people fighting the battle being the 'lava'. This was another way of saying that Sharif himself could not be seen as responsible for the events. One may recall Radovan Karadzic's metaphor about oil and water mentioned in chapter two. When Karadzic constructed his metaphor he found a way of saying that he could not be judged for the violent acts committed by the Serbs. These are good examples of how political leaders make use of ethno-nationalism to achieve certain goals. Ethno-nationalist arguments are often constructed to relieve the political leaders from responsibility in difficult and cruel situations. In a similar fashion to the line of arguments produced by Karadzic and Sharif, L.K. Advani has described the *kar sevaks*, or 'temple volunteers', who tore down the mosque in Ayodhya. Geelani has justified the fighting in Kashmir by saying it is 'natural movements' where Muslim brothers only want to unite. The Pathan warriors who entered Kashmir in 1947 were also then described in a similar way by the government in Pakistan.

There is no lack of examples of usage of ethno-nationalist arguments in the history of war and conflicts. Such arguments are, however, mostly made to conceal the causes of conflict rather than to reveal them. 'The laws of nature followed their own way' is the implicit message, while in fact antagonism and violence can be the planned or not planned, foreseen or unforeseen, consequences of decisions taken by the political elite. A peculiar situation may arise when political leaders start using the ethno-nationalist argument for perhaps strategic purposes, but then start to believe in it when they see the reaction it creates. Naturally, real sentiments based on ethnic identity can be provoked in times of suppression or injustice. The reactions to the election cartel and election fraud in Jammu and Kashmir in 1986/87 were of this kind. But the point in the cases examined here is that polarisation along ethnic lines followed as a consequence of the decisions and actions taken by

the political elite – not the other way around. The order of causality is very important.

The longer the Kargil conflict continued, the more international criticism was directed towards Pakistan. The year before it was India that had been criticised the most since it was the first in carrying out nuclear tests. Now it was the other way around. As pressure from the international community mounted on Pakistan, a divide between prime minister Nawaz Sharif and General Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan's Chief of the Army Staff, was revealed. Musharraf showed clear support for the forces in Kargil and a connection between the 'intruders' and the Pakistani military establishment became visible. Sharif on the other hand was more hesitant in supporting the 'fighters' in Kargil. Later, commenting on Sharif's and his own involvement in the Kargil conflict, Musharraf said in a Time Magazine interview: 'I was chief of army staff, so I take full responsibility for whatever my army does. However, Kargil has to be seen in the total perspective of Kashmir, and such far-reaching decisions are not taken by one man alone. Everyone was on board, including the prime minister'.[20]

Having been strongly affected by the economic sanctions that followed from the tests in 1998 Pakistan was at this stage severely destabilised. The Kargil conflict, in effect, provided the incentive for Musharraf to carry out the military coup that would follow later. The conflict, however, would intensify before the coup in Pakistan was to take place. The scope of the conflict should be mentioned here. If we compare the number of casualties in the conflicts between India and Pakistan in 1947–48, where about 1900 Indian troops were killed, the conflict in 1965 which claimed the lives of a little more than 3000 Indian troops, and the 1971 war which claimed almost 4000 Indian soldiers lives, the Kargil conflict was more limited with between 4–500 Indian soldiers killed.[21] The total number of casualties in the conflict during the summer may be around 1500, although it is hard to separate the casualties in the border conflict from the ongoing conflict inside Jammu and Kashmir. By most conventional definitions the conflict in Kargil was a war since it had a death count above one thousand, there was extensive use of regular military units representing two nations fighting each other, and there was a serious attempt made by one actor to alter significantly the existing boundaries or de facto line of control in the area.

While Indian troops had to begun to recapture some of the occupied mountain ridges and tops, intervention by the United States





put a halt to the conflict. Following a visit by the Commander of the US forces in South Asia, General Anthony Zinni, to Islamabad, Nawaz Sharif made a visit to Washington on 4 July, and after the meeting with President Clinton the forces occupying the Kargil and surrounding areas were successfully ordered by Nawaz Sharif to pull out by the end of July.

India regained control over the occupied areas and the successes in the Kargil conflict surely contributed to giving the BJP enough support to win the election that followed in October – a consequence surely unforseen by the leadership in Pakistan. The new government that was formed in New Delhi, however, needed support from no less than 23 allies. At the same time in Pakistan the situation deteriorated quickly. Sharif knew that Musharraf could no longer be trusted, and to keep the General sweet Sharif prolonged Musharraf's appointment as Chief of the Army Staff. But when Musharraf flew to a meeting in Colombo Sharif dismissed him from his post. Musharraf was well prepared for this and had ordered the army in advance to arrest Sharif if such a thing were to happen. On 12 October when Musharraf returned to Islamabad the coup had been carried out, and Pakistan had again lapsed back into military dictatorship. Sharif was sent to jail for life and Musharraf declared that democracy would be reinstalled in the country as soon as possible. It may be recalled that a similar statement was made by Zia ul-Haq after his coup in the 1970s, after which democracy was put on hold for eleven years. Nevertheless, unlike Ali Bhutto's, Sharif's life was spared and in December 2000 he was released from jail under a presidential pardon and sent into exile to Saudi Arabia.

After the coup, when it seemed clear that General Musharaff would mainly devote his attention to internal political matters, tension with India subsided. But the situation inside Jammu and Kashmir did not improve. Fighting continued and the Indian-based separatists selected strategic targets in Srinagar in its violent campaigns. The attention of the international community however was not caught until the end of December, but then it was Pakistan- and Afghanistan-based separatists who were playing the leading role.

On December 24, at 5.10 pm, Indian Airlines flight IC 814 was hijacked on its way from Kathmandu to Delhi. The five hijackers first made the plane land in Amritsar, then the flight continued to Lahore and Dubai. Finally it landed at Kandahar airport in Afghanistan. During the landing in Dubai 26 women and children were released with the body of one passenger, the 25 year-old

Rupin Katyal, travelling with his wife on their honeymoon, who had been stabbed to death by the hijackers after he had tried to remove his blindfold. At Kandahar, the hijackers demanded the release of 35 separatists in Indian jails and a ransom of 200 million US dollars in exchange for the lives of the 152 passengers and 11 crew members. Later the demand for money was dropped and the release of only three separatists was demanded: Umar Saeed Sheikh, who is associated with Al Faran and Harkat ul-Ansar and who orchestrated the kidnapping of one American and three British tourists in 1994 with the demand for the release of Maulana Masood Azhar; Mushtak Ahmed Zargar, the chief of the organisation Al Umar; and the Maulana Masood Azhar, one of the most important leaders of Harkut ul-Ansar. It was also the latter's release that was demanded by Al-Faran when five Western tourists were kidnapped in 1995. This time, on New Year's Eve, the kidnappers managed to negotiate the release of the three separatist activists. At the international level it now became clear that the interests of India and the US converged over their relationship with Afghanistan, especially since it was alleged that there was a connection between Osama Bin Laden and the key players in the kidnapping drama.

The Afghanistan- and Pakistan-based organisations increased their political capital with this success. Again the Kashmir conflict was identified as the main source of tension in South Asia. The Vajpayee government suffered a minor crisis from the incident. The release of the passengers was met by celebrations but also critics who said that the government was 'humiliated by the terrorists'. However, releasing prisoners in kidnapping situations or giving way to separatist demands in crisis situations had occurred under the office of all parties in government since 1989,[22] most notably the exchange of prisoners for the kidnapped Rubaya Sayeed (see chapter four) which can be said to have triggered the violent phase that began in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Consequently, more members of the opposition parties were careful when delivering their critique regarding how this hijacking drama was handled.

The separatist and non-separatist political forces based in Jammu and Kashmir promoted their movements and their identities in different ways and more forcefully after this drama, which had created the impression that the political initiative regarding Kashmir was mainly located in Pakistan.

In January 2000, the National Conference government in Jammu and Kashmir formally endorsed a report presented by the State





Autonomy Committee (SAC). Although it was not simply a 're-assertion of the 1953 Delhi Agreement between Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah and Jawaharlal Nehru on the constitutional relationship between the State and the Indian Union'[23] it sought mainly to restore a high degree of autonomy to the State, leaving the Union responsible only for legislation on matters of Defence, External Affairs and Communications. On June 26 the Assembly in Jammu and Kashmir passed a resolution with a two-thirds majority stating its approval of the SAC report. This may have restored some confidence to the Abdullah government in the Kashmir Valley, but it also provoked strong criticism from Hindu nationalist parties and cadre groups supporting the BJP government. For example, the Shiv Sena leader Bal Thackeray demanded that the Abdullah government should be dismissed. However, Prime Minister Vajpayee showed some support for Abdullah, declaring that the suggestions proposed by Abdullah were 'within the framework of the constitution'.[24] Interest in the debate on the SAC report, however, was overtaken by the cease-fire agreement declared by the Hizbul Mujahedin on 24 July.

The clearest sign that some change was under way came in early May 2000 when the All Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani declared that his organisation could accept political solutions to the conflict even if meant that Kashmir would come out as 'a divided state'. Several leaders of the Jamaat-i-Islami and the APHC had previously always advocated accession to Pakistan for the whole region controlled by India (see chapter four). Perhaps this move was an effort to create a compromise and to formulate a more coherent line for the APHC organisation. Since it was created, the Jamaat-i-Islami has dominated the organisation but it has also, as was mentioned earlier, been plagued by its internal conflicts. Most notably the leadership has shifted between Syed Ali Shah Geelani, who has held the most outspoken pro-Pakistan position among the leaders of the organisation and been in favour of a connection with the Hizbul Mujahedin, and Ghulam Mohammad Bhat, who has a more moderate position. In November 1997, Butt objected to the 'gun culture' in Kashmir and after he was elected the new leader or 'Amir' of the organisation he took a more distanced stance towards militancy. In 1998 he questioned the connection with the Hizbul Mujahedin and even suggested that it should be cut. Although he was severely criticized by Geelani and his supporters, Butt was elected as the Amir for three more years in late July 2000. When the Hizbul Mujahedin declared

its cease-fire in late July, the impression was created that perhaps the militant organisation was harmonizing its position with the Jamaat-i-Islami's moderate leader.

The cease-fire announcement was made by the Hizbul Mujahedin chief of operations in Jammu and Kashmir, Abdul Majid Dar, and was later confirmed by the Pakistan-based Commander in Chief, Muhammed Yusuf Shah (who is more commonly known as Syeed Salahuddin, see chapter four). The Indian government soon replied by ceasing all its military activities directed against the Hizbul Mujahedin. But it transpired that the cease-fire proposal was not as firmly anchored with other separatist organisations as it had at first appeared.

In early August, the All Party Hurriyat Conference and Ali Shah Geelani protested against any negotiations that might be held between the government and the Hizbul Mujahedin, and soon the Pakistan-based separatist groups such as the Laskar-e-Toiba and Harkat-ul-Ansar made it clear that they would try to break the cease-fire. The Hizbul Mujahedin leaders began to give in to pressure and soon declared that any talks on peace in Kashmir would have to include Pakistan as a party in the negotiations. Pressure was further increased on the Hizbul Mujahedin when opponents to the cease-fire initiated a campaign of violent attacks between 1 and 2 August, with over a hundred civilians targeted and killed.[25] On 3 August however talks were initiated between government representatives and the Hizbul Mujahedin. But Abdul Majid Dar, who attended the meeting, declared his life was in danger for participating in the talks. The cease-fire had caused severe divides in the Hizbul Mujahedin as well as the Jamaat-i-Islami. On August 8 it was broken.

We are familiar with the dynamics that entered and disrupted what was hoped to be the beginning of a peace process in Kashmir. It has been repeated numerous times before, in Northern Ireland and in the Israel/Palestine conflict, just to mention two more recent examples. The 'dynamic' that is initiated makes the marginal cost very high for anyone to take the first step to enter real peace negotiations and to try to uphold a cease-fire. A consensus is hard to reach when there are several fighting factions, and those organisations that consider a change of tactics will be threatened by internal divides. One faction may however decide to try to negotiate for peace since there are some clear advantages to be gained, besides the fact that violence can be put to an end. When one faction decides to enter a cease-fire it most likely will aim at securing some kind of amnesty agreement should the peace process evolve and arms be laid down for good. Also, they





may prepare for a political future in a democratic setting where they would gain much support for being the group that 'settled the conflict'. But this situation may also cause strong incentives for the groups that stand outside a peace agreement to break a peace process. Those who decide to stand outside may feel they are a part of a zero- sum game where whatever the 'peace-prone' parties will gain will be at the expense of those who continue to fight. The advantage of giving up arms later, when another group has secured a cease-fire, may be less clear. And in the case of Kashmir there are practically no incentives for the forces based in Pakistan and Afghanistan to agree to a cease-fire – like the one proposed in June – to begin with. They have no aspirations to a political future in a divided democratic Kashmir. The only scenario, according to them, where they would gain is if the whole Kashmir region came under control of Pakistan. The Afghanistan- and Pakistan-based organisations joined the armed conflict for reasons very different from those for example of the members of the Hizbul Mujahedin, who are mainly recruited from the Indian-controlled side.

The internal divisions that the Hizbul Mujahedin, the Jamaat-i-Islami and the APHC were suffering from remained after the cease-fire was broken. The Jamaat-i-Islami is undecided about how closely it should involve itself with the Hizbul Mujahedin and the Hizbul Mujahedin is divided about whether it should listen to the Jammu and Kashmir-based Jamaat-i-Islami or the Pakistan based organisation with the same name, but with an entirely different kind of command.

By September 2000, Kashmir had returned to its previous condition with a high level of violence and shelling across the border between the Indian and Pakistani army units. But only a few months later a new initiative was taken – this time it came from the central government in New Delhi. Prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee unilaterally declared a kind of cease-fire for the holy month of Ramadan that began on 29 November. All offensive operations by the military were called off which received mixed responses by the separatists in a similar pattern to that which had evolved in June. The Pakistan based militant organisations declared they would intensify their operations while the Hizbul Mujahedin and the Jamaat-i-Islami were internally divided on the issue. It seems that Abdul Majid Dar who pursued the cease-fire in July welcomed the move from the centre while Syed Salahuddin called the initiative 'a mockery'. In a similar way Ghulam

Muhammad Bhatt 'expressed support for a peaceful Ramadan' while Syed Ali Shah Geelani rejected the cease-fire.[26] Hopes have been raised that the events in the latter half of 2000 could be the beginning of a real peace process in Kashmir. But the question is if political events at the macro level will support such a development. Between 1999 and 2000 larger political processes had been set in motion. Old alliances would give way to new ones in an unforseen way.

The cold war and the conflict in Afghanistan in the 1980s produced a strong relationship between the US and Pakistan. Pakistan was an seen as an ally of the US while India on the other hand upheld ties with the Soviet Union established at independence. After the cold war ended, this situation remained for a while but by the end of the 1990s fewer reasons existed for the US to support Pakistan, and simultaneously the Indo-Russian ties had weakened. The US took a strong position against both India and Pakistan after the 1998 nuclear tests and economic sanctions were imposed against both countries. Some common ground was found between India and the US during the hijacking drama in December 2000, but it was the Kargil 1999 war that was important in paving the way for a change that Pakistan assuredly had not bargained for.

The fact that the US clearly named Pakistan as the aggressor in the Kargil conflict, and consequently put strong political pressure on Nawaz Sharif to order the withdrawal of forces, put the US on the same side as India on security issues. This was a starting-point for consolidating a more friendly relationship between 'the world's two largest democracies'. Before Kargil, the US had been frequently criticized in India for its support of Pakistan, and accused of pursuing 'neo-colonial' politics with regard to trade issues and intellectual property rights. When President Clinton made his visit to India in March 2000, which culminated with a speech in the Indian Parliament, there was little to be seen of this critique. The visit was seen to mark a change in the relationship between India and the US. This became even clearer after President Clinton made only a hasty stop in Pakistan and delivered a televised speech where he stated that Pakistan would have to change its course in politics in South Asia or be isolated from Washington. The US visit to India was reciprocated with Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit to the US in September 2000. Vajpayee's visit was likewise crowned with a speech before the US Congress.[27] A crescendo in friendly Indo-US relations was reached when the other Bill, Bill Gates, made his visit





to India in September 2000 to sign a co-operation agreement between Microsoft and the Indian software company Infosys. Gates here advocated globalisation and liberalisation in economic policies, and few critical voices were raised against his standpoints. This is interesting since WTO meetings where the same policies have been advocated have been severely criticised in India. When the bonding between the US and India was as most intense, General Musharraf admitted that the interest of the US had shifted away from Islamabad.[28] The map of security alliances in South Asia, it seems, is on its way to be fundamentally changed.

## Less or more danger at the dawn of a new era?

The history of the Kashmir conflict from the 1980s to the year 2000 is a history of unforseen events and in many cases unintended outcomes from political decisions taken by the elite. The departure point for this chapter was the observation that what politicians aim for can be radically different from the outcome, and that this may be the most urgent problem for security development in South Asia. It is an urgent problem not only because people are killed in confrontations with conventional arms, but also because nuclear weapons have been added to the conflict scenarios. Why outcomes differ from intentions is to a large extent caused by factors unforseen by the decision-makers and factors that add to uncertainty in the minds of the decision-makers in a conflict. In a worst-case scenario, the political dynamic that led to the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir could be reproduced with different actors and at a different level of politics, which would lead to a larger confrontation between India and Pakistan. Let us examine some of the factors that we can derive from the discussion above.

To begin with, the implications of the 'new' Indo-US relations should be considered. No doubt some of the euphoria generated by the new 'friendship' will wane, but consider this symbolic event. In the preparations for the yearly festival celebrating the Goddess Durga, the Durga Puja, it is common in many regions to erect impressive 'tableaux' for the festival. These usually include replicas of important temples or holy sites in India. In Bhopal, however, the MP Nagar Traders Association (which won second price for their tableau in 1999 and 1998) spent 280, 000 Rupees to produce a replica of the White House, since they felt so 'inspired by Vajpayee's visit to the US'.[29] Most observers I think would agree this would have been unthinkable only three years earlier.

From a security perspective, the change in the relationship between India and the US that has occurred since the Kargil war is one of the most important events in this region since the war in Afghanistan. Assuredly, evidence can be found that such an alliance was building up even before the Kargil war. Nevertheless, the strong bonding that occurred in 2000 was unforseen by most observers of international politics. The security context of the region has gone from a situation where the US was allied with Pakistan, and India were relying to some extent on the Soviet Union, to a situation where Pakistan seems to be looking for support from China and perhaps even Russia, and the US and India have joined hands in security[30] as well as commercial matters. This is an important change of the security situation not only for South Asia but for Asia as a whole. However, it does not necessarily mean the region is more stable or less 'dangerous' than before. The opposite may the outcome.

There is no sign that the pace of nuclear and missile proliferation has slowed down or will do so in the near future. On the contrary, the pace seems to increase, at least according to the following indicators.

A proposal for a new nuclear doctrine was presented by an advisory group to the BJP government in August 1999. In it, Brajesh Mishra, the most important security adviser in the BJP government, stated that a significant part of India's government budget should be used for developing nuclear arms that can be fired from ground, air and water. According to an early estimate presented in 1999, this would imply the production of 400 warheads over 30 years. In September 2000 it was indicated that Pakistan was preparing to test Shaheen II – a missile with a range of possibly up to 2500 km. India's most important scientist in its missile programme, Abdul Kalam Azad, declared at the same time that India has the 'capability to design and develop any kind of missile including the Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM)'.[31] The Agni II that was tested in April 1999 has a range of 2300 km and is the precursor for ICBMs such as Agni III and Surya that may have ranges up to 5000 km. The evidence available today shows no sign that the new relationship between India and the US has had any effect towards military detente. On the contrary, South Asia and China seem to be increasingly caught up in a missile race involving the development of nuclear arms. Trust between the states involved here seems to be decreasing almost proportionately to the build-up of arms. The feeling of uncertainty and distrust among political leaders in the region seems to be increasing. The US seems quite interested in





using India in its deterrence game against China, but this may just as well make the region more insecure than secure. If one may speculate on this issue, some positive development could follow if Pakistan felt threatened by being isolated in this course of development and therefore decided to shift its policies concerning the Line of Control and actively pursue tension-reducing measures towards India. Perhaps this is already happening. In December 2000 Pakistan withdrew some of its troops from the Line of Control. Also, six months later General Musharraf agreed to meet Prime Minister Vajpayee for discussions on Kashmir. The meeting was held in Agra in July. Although no agreements were signed, this was an important step towards a dialogue on the Kashmir question. If this trend in Indo-Pakistani relations were to develop further, with more troop withdrawals from both sides, and more meetings with the leaders, the chances of a conflict starting by mistake or misunderstanding would be significantly reduced. The nuclear deterrence situation, however, complicates matters somewhat.

In one way the present situation is reminiscent of the situation that developed in the 1950s between the US and the Soviet Union when a 'missile gap' was feared in both countries. The fear of a missile gap was so widespread that the advantages of a preemptive strike were discussed. India, China and Pakistan cannot escape this logic, where the advantages of a preemptive strike against an enemy must at least enter the minds of the decision-makers. As we learn from peace and war studies, such calculations can prevail in a situation when the parties are striving to attain second-strike capability, but when they may not yet have attained it. Add to this the lack of reliable intelligence information and we have one more factor that could increase incentives for preemptive measures. If India's surveillance satellites provide images with too low a resolution to determine what is happening on the ground in Pakistan (even with very high resolution images it can be difficult to determine whether for example a missile is armed with a nuclear or conventional war-head) and information that Pakistan buys from commercial providers of satellite images comes in at very slow pace, the incentives for a pre-emptive strike will be higher than if reliable information were available. It seems that some comparison can be made between South Asia and the Cold War logic, but it is also clear that many things differ. The main difference is perhaps that in South Asia the competing powers are neighbours, which was not the case with the main parties in the cold war. This may change incentives for preemptive strikes and how risk is perceived, and

therefore we, or the political leaders in the conflict, may have no clear case to look back at that could provide an indication of what is likely to happen – again, a factor that adds to uncertainty.

However, it is not the risk of a pre-emptive strike itself that is the main problem. It is when the logic of nuclear pre-emptive action is inserted in a context of regularly occurring confrontations with conventional military forces, even to the scale of a war, that the situation must be judged the most dangerous. Let us for example assume that Pakistan again embarks on a Kargil-like offensive and that this time the US does not manage to persuade Pakistan's leaders to call for a withdrawal of its troops. India would then require a significantly much larger force of conventional military units, in comparison to what was used in 1999, to recapture occupied positions. As India would increase its number of military units in the area the fear would grow on the Pakistani side that perhaps the force India was assembling could be used for an offensive rush into Pakistan, where the objective would be to recapture the whole Kashmir area. The Union Home Mininster Lal Krishnan Advani has made such claims since the BJP assumed office, saying that Kashmir should be restored to Indian control according to the 1947 boundaries. We find some indication to how the leadership in Pakistan could react to a scenario of this kind. General Musharraf made the following comment in a CBS interview for the programme *60 minutes*: 'I would never like to use it first of all. But if you ask me a direct question when I would use them ... If Pakistan's security gets jeopardised, then only one would like to think of it'.[32] In a situation like this, where Pakistan had perhaps not planned a large scale confrontation to begin with, but only a 'localized confrontation', decision-makers would have to act on a situation they were unprepared for. Here the risk of a nuclear war could become significant. Finding plausible scenarios of rapid escalations of violence in the region is unfortunately quite easy. In other words, the risk of nuclear war cannot be neglected as long as tensions between India and Pakistan and the Kashmir conflict continue. Solutions to the conflict in the region still seem remote.

It is not far-fetched to imagine that the politicians who are the main decision-makers in the Kashmir conflict could find important inspiration in the way solutions to difficult questions have been produced in the conflict in Northern Ireland. But there are few signs indicating that the 'Northern Ireland model' could be used in South Asia. The main difference in comparing these two cases lies in the great animosity between India and Pakistan. As long as it





persists, distrust will make any proposal for a higher degree of autonomy for the Kashmir region unrealistic.

Also the complexity of overlapping geo-strategic interests must be considered here. The border disputes in the Kashmir region do not only involve Pakistan and India. They also involve China, which controls the eastern parts of Kashmir that India also claims. The claims that the three nations make today in this region are incompatible and need to be resolved to enable a more stable peace process. Considering how boundaries are drawn in the region also reveals complexities that complicate a solution via a plebiscite. A plebiscite has been suggested a number of times with reference to the fact that the promise of a plebiscite, which was a part of the temporary accession agreement in 1947, was never carried out. Suggesting a plebiscite, however, is not as simple as it sounds.

Even if the border disputes were solved and even if all parties, China, India and Pakistan, agreed to a plebiscite, there are several more questions that need to be tackled. For example, it would have to be decided who should vote with whom. The region could vote as one, including everyone according to how the boundaries were drawn in 1947, or the area could be divided in perhaps five to six regions that would reflect how boundaries have de facto existed since 1948. It could take a separate plebiscite only to decide this. Then the region(s) would have to vote in several sessions since there would be more than two options to vote on – joining India, joining Pakistan, or forming a separate state. It also would have to be decided what kind of majorities should be the basis for saying that one option would win over another. A plebiscite would also require peace for at least a period of two to three years, so that free opinions could truly have a chance to be formed among the citizens in the region, and so that those who fled the area during the war would have a chance to return. The situation in Kashmir is far away from this today, but at least we know what is required to begin with if a peace process is going to have any chance at all: detente between India and Pakistan.

If relations were to improve between the two main adversaries, the level of violence inside Jammu and Kashmir would most likely also decline. The reason for this is that some of the strongest militant organisations acting in the region today come from Pakistan and Afghanistan. If an agreement were reached to reduce tension, Pakistan would naturally have to stop supporting these groups. And it seems that the separatist political organisations remaining on the Indian side are now more than at any time during the last decade

ready to continue with politics as a dialogue rather than with violent means. A stable peace process is still far away, but we can hope that the first steps towards one were taken in June and December 2000 and with the Agra-Summit in July 2001.

Almost all peace processes fail in their first steps. And in this case many of those who pursue the fighting know nothing but the violence. The actors involved simply have to enter a process where they will have to learn to communicate with new means, and this can take time.

It should be emphasised again that the Kashmir conflict presents an extremely complex situation. It involves a number of different definitions of what the dispute is about, it has a large number of actors on the micro as well as the macro level with a high number of alliances between them. It is possibly 'the most *dangerous* conflict' because it is the most *complicated* conflict in the world today. The nuclear and missile proliferation only adds to the danger and complexity. However, if a peace process could be initiated between India and Pakistan, and a dialogue with the militant actors on the ground in Jammu and Kashmir could be re-established, the risk of going to war by accident would be drastically reduced. Perhaps the first step towards tension reduction could be taken if Pakistan felt it was too isolated as a consequence of a new security alliance between India and the US. This would truly be an unforseen consequence of the Kargil war. Perhaps nations can 'go to peace', and not only to war, by accident. In a more frightening scenario, brought to mind by the way the US presented itself against Russia and China on security issues during the summer of 2001, the old cold war polarization could be awakened after a little more of a decade of slumbering. In such a scenario Pakistan could ally itself with Russia and/or China. During the old cold war the superpowers fought by proxy in Latin America and South East Asia. In this scenario a new line of a divided world would run straight through Kashmir, with nuclear arms on both sides.



# 7

# EPILOGUE: THE CAUSES OF VIOLENT SEPARATISM AND THE ROLE OF ETHNICITY

Despite this historical record, which shows Kashmiri nationalism as different from Indian nationalism, violent separatism in Jammu and Kashmir was not predetermined. Democracy in Jammu and Kashmir could have survived. The history of the power relations of groups in the area certainly shaped political positions, but it does do not tell us why violence spread in the late 1980s.

Separatism was not determined by ethnic factors, the historical background or even the Pakistani intervention. Pakistan undoubtedly fuelled the conflict by supporting militants and in doing so, took the risk of initiating another large-scale war in the subcontinent. The Kargil war in 1999 is the clearest example of how high Pakistan has been willing to raise the stakes in this conflict. Nevertheless, the discontent that finally ignited the Valley in the late 1980s and took the expression of separatism in violent forms was, however, mainly caused by an internal process. As democratic institutions were undermined, tension increased and large-scale violence was finally triggered by the kidnapping of Rubaya Sayeed in 1989. From this point onwards the violence escalated, moderate voices were given less room for free expression, and finally violence became self-perpetuating. It was in this context that the most serious polarization of Hindus and Muslims occurred. Therefore, what is sometimes mistaken for the cause of the conflict – the strong polarization on ethnic lines – should instead be regarded as the result of a preceding and distinctly political conflict in Jammu and Kashmir – a conflict, between elites in the state and the central government, over power. And one of the more important factors that led to the escalation of violence was the weak party organizations of both the National Conference and the Congress (I).

Because of their internal weaknesses, the Congress (I) and the National Conference resorted to semirepressive policies and democratic legitimacy was lost and violence escalated.[1] Undoubtedly, the political elite, including the separatist leaders, made quite rational calculations that retained sight of their political goals. But we should also remember that the processes we have examined were extremely complex, that in many situations the parties had no time to make advanced calculations, that many results were no doubt unexpected or unforeseen, and that the most desperate actions that were taken in the late 1980s may have been taken by those who could see no other option.

The factors crucial in producing violent separatism in Jammu and Kashmir are better understood after comparison with developments in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. For a long time, politics in Tamil Nadu was characterized by the separatist demands of Dravidian nationalists. As political institutions remained intact and as the central government refrained from the type of intervention resorted to in Jammu and Kashmir, separatism never entered the spiral of escalating violence. Eventually the demand for Dravida Nadu was dropped. In West Bengal, where what primordialists identify as the prerequisite for violence and separatism were present, violent separatism based on a Bengali identity has been almost absent. And in spite of the turbulent past, since the end of the 1970s political institutions have been strengthened and become more stable. As a result the central government has refrained from employing interventionist strategies in the state.

In the final comparison we also saw that there is a risk that the political logic that produced the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir can be repeated on a higher level of politics – on the international level and between India and Pakistan. Although both nations certainly have obtained their nuclear arms primarily to be used as stakes in a game of deterrence, there are also so many uncertainties that no one can predict whether the weapons of mass destruction will be used or not. Just as the conflict in Kashmir in the 1980s evolved in a series of unpredicted events, so could a war on a larger scale between India and Pakistan. The Kargil war has already shown that both India and Pakistan were ready to continuously increase the use of conventional forces in Kashmir. If a third party had not intervened, in this case the United States, the conflict would most likely have escalated further. A similar situation could be repeated with real risks of using nuclear arms involved. The recent events in the region also show how political leaders are





prone to justify their actions by pointing at the 'ethnic factor' as something which is out of their immediate control. Political leaders tend to claim they have to follow the 'natural cause of events' and portray their own roles as quite innocent. But when we scrutinize their actions we can see how ethnicity on the international level, just like it is being used on the national and state level, is used as an instrument for power. Therefore we should conclude by making a final contribution to the debate on ethnicity and its role in violent conflicts and separatism.

## The ethnic factor

Although we may observe that groups are mobilized along ethnic lines, this does not automatically provide us with the causes behind those movements that may challenge democracy. The discussion above has shown that the term ethnic conflict is a vague and sometimes abused one. Ethnicity has long been used in anthropology as a category when describing the affiliations and cultural allegiances of groups. Sometimes it has been used from a subjective perspective when individuals have classified their identity as a part of a nation, village group, etc.[2] But the term has also been used objectively when, for example, anthropologists have defined individuals as members of certain groups with a common trait such as language, geographic region of settlement, or race. No doubt confusion was created when ethnicity as a concept was taken over by political scientists and when it began to be used to denote political actors and, in particular, conflicts. A transfer of meaning may have taken place unconsciously and with no intentions other than to simplify the language to describe political events. Nevertheless, such simplifications can be a dangerous mistake.

From an academic angle it may seem less dangerous. We simply define what we are referring to, and we may only intend to use the term in a descriptive way. But a careless usage of the term ethnic conflict easily creates the impression that we are dealing with a specific phenomenon of an almost mystical nature.[3] The media usage, in particular, of the term 'ethnic conflict' seems to be associated with the idea that different ethnic identities naturally work as repelling magnets. We have also seen this opinion represented in the academic debate. Instead of demystifying human relations, the role of culture in politics and the processes that guide human behaviour, several analysts argue that we should retain the idea that we are dealing with fuzzy, uncontrollably irrational and

inherently dangerous forces. Ethnicity as a concept is easily hijacked into the political language and this makes it all the more difficult to use in social science analysis. But it is clear that the more extreme primordial standpoints are easily refuted by empirical evidence. Also, some of the standpoints found in even the moderate forms of primordialism can be seriously challenged. West Bengal, for example, proves that cleavages based on identity (regional identity in this case) do not automatically lead to ethnic two-party systems. And when violence peaked in the 1970s, parties were not ethnically defined. Furthermore, Tamil Nadu shows that ethnic polarization did not always subject to centrifugal forces, and even in Jammu and Kashmir representatives of different ethnic groups have been able to cooperate at times and in spite of a conflict-ridden past. So what, then, is a more useful view of ethnicity? The final conclusion to be drawn from this study is that the role of ethnicity in politics and conflict does not have to be very different from the more commonly recognized role of class.

The comparison can be made with some help from Adam Przeworski's discussion on class mobilization. Przeworski describes different views of the transformation from so-called objective to subjective relations. Since Marx wrote the *Poverty of Philosophy*, class has in objective terms been defined as a part of the base level, '– a base that is simultaneously objective and economic.'[4] The subjective relates to 'the sociological meaning of this term, that is, class characterized by organization and consciousness of solidarity.' From this distinction grew the deterministic idea that objective positions finally become expressed as 'interest and political action.' Another approach, sometimes called voluntaristic, saw the political party as a necessary factor in the transformation – 'objective conditions do not lead spontaneously, 'of themselves', to political class organization.'[5] It is possible to argue that the deterministic position corresponds to the first group of theories presented in chapter two – the view that the mere existence of ethnic cleavages will inevitably lead to ethnic party competition and conflict. The position arrived at in this study is that ethnicity should be regarded in a way that corresponds to the voluntaristic position. We may be able objectively to define language group, religious affiliation, skin colour, and so on, but we cannot predict ethnic conflict or violent separatism from those observations. Przeworski concludes that:

> Classes are not prior to political and ideological practice. Any definition of people as workers – or individuals, Catholics,





> French-speakers, Southerners, and the like – is necessarily immanent to the practice of political forces engaged in struggles to maintain or in various ways alter the existing social relations. Classes are organized and disorganized as outcomes of continuous struggles.[6]

As suggested by Przeworski, the same can be said of ethnicity. The understanding of both class and ethnicity as socio-political constructions allows us to move further with an unprejudiced perspective. Consequently, ethnic politics does not have to be portrayed as something uniquely different from, for example, class politics.[7] One reply to this is that ethnic politics is different because it is characterized by zero-sum games. But surely zero-sum games in ethnic politics have mirror images in class politics. For example, the earlier mentioned Ayodhya dispute in India (see chapter six) concerns a mosque located exactly on a spot where the BJP wants to build a temple. Followers of the BJP tore down the mosque in 1992 and it has not been rebuilt since. But such extreme action is not unique to ethnic conflict. This uncompromising attitude can be compared to the Marxist position that bargaining on exploitation is unacceptable.[8] By way of example, Bo Rothstein describes the clash in the German Social Democratic party between Rosa Luxemburg and Eduard Bernstein. Whereas Bernstein argued for bargaining with the capitalists, Luxemburg saw revolution as the only way to overthrow the capitalist system. This position has been retained by Marxists and some Communist parties until today, and we see some similarity to the way in which BJP hardliners define their position as unnegotiable. Both class and ethnic politics at times can be uncompromising, but compromise is also possible. Several European labour parties, for example, were ready to compromise and bargain on the issue of exploitation, and labour interests there were secured through gradual change. Similarly we find that moderate factions within the BJP were against the demolition of the mosque. Some suggested compromises such as building a temple structure around the mosque. This compromise was naturally too bizarre for most Muslims, but from both sides in the conflict came at least some leaders or factions who were willing to search for solutions by negotiations. Therefore, we can conclude that these examples and several of the results of this study show that when political competition is a zero-sum game, the outcome is not necessarily decided by whether or not the issue is related to class or ethnicity. In my opinion, no social science theory has yet

demonstrated convincingly that class and ethnicity are different in kind in the way they affect political outcomes. We may, however, see them as different species or categories in, for example, the way in which they lend themselves to political mobilization. An appeal to an established ethnic identity may sometimes, in the short term, be more effective in arousing political awareness than an appeal to class. Spreading class-consciousness can be a more laborious process even if, for example, the communist party, CPI(M), in West Bengal has shown that it can certainly be done in the Indian context. Ethnic mobilization may be more easily produced because it involves an appeal to parts of the individual's identity that are already present and known, although maybe in an unpoliticized form. Class-consciousness, on the other hand, often has to be taught. In addition, the existence in most societies of geographical segregation according to ethnicity makes ethnic identity a more practical vehicle for separatism than class. But these differences do not enable us to predict the outcomes of political conflicts and power struggles from whether they are class-based or ethnic in character. Class and ethnicity still belong to the same family of political variables. And therefore the Kashmir conflict must not necessarily be seen as a zero-sum game even if this is what some of the main political actors would like us to believe. There are political forces, even in this conflict, that are willing to both negotiate and make compromises.



# NOTES

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1 The full references and acknowledgements are included in the beginning of chapter four.
2 This is mainly: Krig og Rasjonalitet: 'Kashmirkonfliktens dynamikk i den sørasiatiske atomvåpenopprustningen' in Kathinka Frøystad, Eldrid Mageli and Arild Ruud (Eds.) 2000. Nærbilder av India – Samfunn, politik og utvikling. Cappelen Akademisk Forlag; The Kashmir Conflict' in *Sipri Yearbook 1999*. Oxford University Press: and articles written for the Swedish Daily newspaper - Svenska Dagbladet.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

1 The quality of the available accounts on the history of Kashmir varies. Also, some are quite emotional and patriotic. See for example Bazaz 1995:114–5. P.N.K. Bamzai's three volumes on Kashmir are an important source of information but also contain descriptions of the population that only reproduce the race biology of the 1930s (see for example Bamzai 1994:13–21, Vol. 1). Bamzai's account of the peoples of Kashmir also contains formulations that are similar or identical to those found in *The Culture of Kashmir* by S.M. Iqbal and K.L. Nirash 1978:8–24. For one example, see the description of Pandits in Iqbal & Nirash 1978:13, and compare with Bamzai 1994:17, Vol. 1, and also Bamzai 1957:18.
2 Denzin and Lincoln 1994:373.
3 Hobsbawm 1993:63.

## 2 EXPLAINING VIOLENT SEPARATISM

1 Sharma and Mishra 1995.
2 Varshney 1992; Brass 1994:215–27.
3 Ganguly 1996:76–107; Kohli 1990. Also see Ganguly 1997 and Bose 1997 which are important and more recent contributions.
4 Puri's study from 1993 is probably one of the most concise and useful available. Also, the many newspaper articles published by Puri on the Kashmir conflict have been used in my research.

5 See for example Gurr and Harff 1994:9–13; Horowitz 1985:3–12; Brown 1993:3–4.
6 Bowen, 1996:3–14.
7 See Barry 1975; Horowitz 1985:73–4; Brass 1991:18–23; a number of definitions are discussed in Glazer and Moynihan 1975:3–5, 29–52, 113–5, 467–470; van den Berghe 1987:15–36; and Smith 1993:28–31.
8 Mill 1861:10–11.
9 The wide ranging literature on primordial and instrumental views of ethnicity includes, for example, Horowitz 1985; Glazer and Moynihan 1975; van den Berghe 1981; Brass 1991; Calhoun 1993b.
10 Brass 1991:69. For an early version of primordialism, see Shils 1957:130–45.
11 See Geertz 1963:109. Also see Calhoun 1993b:222–223, and Eller and Coughlan 1993, for a discussion on this.
12 See Smith 1986:6–46, 129–73, 212–4; Calhoun 1993b:227–9.
13 Horowitz 1985:4, 318–32.
14 Ibid., 259.
15 Ibid., 179, 289–440, 342.
16 In this discussion, Horowitz refers mainly to the work of Sartori. But the ideas on spatial competition (which Horowitz, in other words, describes in chapter eight) were originally presented by Harold Hotelling in 1927 and later developed by Anthony Downs in 1957 (Downs, however, never makes the assumption that the centrifugal model can appear only when ethnic issues are involved). The hypothesis that western political systems behave according to the centripetal model, is, to say the least, difficult to demonstrate empirically.
17 Ibid., 333–49. Although Downs did not label such a system 'ethnic' he developed a model with precisely the same characteristics. See Downs 1957:118–21. Unfortunately, Horowitz make no reference to Downs.
18 Ibid., 306.
19 Horowitz 1985:291–3, 346.
20 See Horowitz 1991 and Lijphart 1977; 1985.
21 It may also be mentioned that concerning the role of institutions, Horowitz' argumentation is undecided or at least somewhat unclear. In his study of the relationship between structure and actor, Horowitz does *not* solve the contradictions in his own arguments. While he devotes a tremendous effort to a discussion that points to the party system and ethnicity as the main determinants for violent outcomes, he then concludes, about three hundred pages later, that 'elite competition is one of the sources of ethnic conflict.' Compare chapter 7, and page 573.
22 Tingsten 1967:11–82.
23 The coalition between the Akali Dal and the BJP in Punjab in the 1990s is only one example which contradicts Horowitz argument on ethnic party dynamics.
24 This interpretation of Horowitz is also made by Eller and Coughlan, 1993:191–3.
25 This passage originally appears in Michael Walzer's *Radical Principles*, but the quotation is from Putnam, 1993:116.
26 Barry 1975: 502, 504. By ethnicity the author means to race and culture. This section of Barry's argument is also discussed by Paul Brass





1991:336. It is, however, not entirely easy to follow what Barry is referring to in his discussion on ethnicity (see for example Barry 1975:503).
27 The quotation is used in a similar way by Eller and Coughlan 1993:193. See van den Berghe 1978:404–5.
28 Connor 1993 and 1994.
29 This view is discussed by Jha 1991:34.
30 For example, News-report in P1, Swedish Radio, 07:00–08:00 hrs, 15 November 1993.
31 *Newsweek*, 19 April 1993:9.
32 Ben Kiernan has recently argued in *The Pol Pot Regime: Race, Power, and Genocide in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, 1975–1979*, that the Khmer Rouge regime was racist or guided by ethnic sentiments. This position is, however, convincingly rejected by William Shawcross, who maintains the position that the Khmer Rouge was guided by the Marxist-Leninist, Stalinist and Maoist class ideology. See Shawcross 1996:41–6.
33 From a Maoist ideology, the Naxalites have continued a violent uprising against land-owners since the 1960s. See Kohli 1990:279; Rudolph and Rudolph 1987:198. Naxalite groups are still quite active in India.
34 Surprisingly, Eller and Coughlan, who criticized van den Berghe in their article on primordialism, finally ended up by arguing that ethnic sentiments are connected with 'unique strength of emotional attachments.' In particular, see Eller and Coughlan 1993:196, 200.
35 See for example, Brass 1991, Hobsbawm 1990.
36 Brass 1991:75.
37 Anderson 1991:37–46; Hobsbawm 1990:54, 65, 73, 90, 92–110.
38 Mainly, it is Walker Connor and Robert Kaplan that are subjected to the sternest criticism in *One for All*. In particular, see Hardin 1995, chapter six, for an excellent discussion on this topic.
39 Schierup 1991:115–31. Other authors that reject the extreme primordialist approaches in the case of Yugoslavia are Drakulić 1993; Ignatieff 1993:3–5.
40 See for example van den Berghe 1981:17, who writes that: 'The Marxists viewed ethnicity as an epiphenomenon, a remnant of precapitalist modes of production, a false consciousness masking class interests, a mystification of ruling classes to prevent the growth of class consciousness.'
41 Debray, 1977:25–41.
42 Calhoun, 1993b:212.
43 For a well formulated argumentation on this, see Anderson 1991:1–4.
44 Huntington 1968:47. Also see page 53. Huntington's formulation of the problem created controversy since it contained several implications concerning the value of democracy. Another normative problem in Huntington's work on causes of conflict in society, is a certain xenophobic slant, in particular against Islam and Arabic culture. See, for example, Huntington 1968:28, where he supports the view that 'mistrust among the Arabs is internalized early within the value system of the child,' or in Huntington 1993:35, where he claims that in particular 'Islam has bloody borders.'

45 Huntington 1968:3–24, 39–59.The symptom in Durkheim's model is *anomie*.
46 Religious identity has clearly been one of the main vehicles for mobilization in conflicts in Europe. One only needs to consider aggression towards Jews, or the Huguenot persecutions in France, or the Thirty Years War, as examples from a list that can be made quite long.
47 Tilly 1973:433; Gurr 1970:11. We will return to Gurr's work later in this chapter.
48 Manicas, 1987:53, 159–66.
49 For example Kohli 1990.
50 See Huntington 1993: 26.
51 See, for example, Price 1992:431–7, and Kohli 1990:195.
52 Anderson 1991:3.
53 Also, we might add that high living standards are also compatible with separatism, as has been shown in Punjab, Quebec, Northern Italy and former Czechoslovakia.
54 See Gurr 1970:22 and chapter two; Wiberg 1975:55.
55 See Brass 1991:41–8 and Tilly 1973:433, supporting this view.
56 Muller and Seligson 1987:425–51. The quote comes from pp. 444–5.
57 Schock 1996.
58 Clauzweitz 1832:99.
59 Johansson 1988:33–7.
60 This quote was taken from Johansson 1988:29, but it originally appears in Clauzweitz 1832:83.
61 See Nehru 1946:123–4. Chanakya is also known as Kautilya, and was the chief minister of Chandragupta, who came to power in 321 B.C.
62 See Migdal, Kohli and Shue 1994; Kohli 1990.
63 Tilly 1973:447.
64 Linz 1978:39–40, 50.
65 This question is inspired by Daniel Levine's criticism of *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy*, edited by Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead. In particular see Levine 1988:394.
66 Kohli 1990:29.
67 Ibid., 387.
68 Blomkvist 1988:201.
69 The idea of 'structure of political opportunities' was developed by Peter Eisinger. See Eisinger 1973:11–28. The emphasis on either actors or institutions is of course an empirical question.

## 3 JAMMU AND KASHMIR IN TRANSITION

1 See for example Rizvi 1992:49–51; Cheema 1992:94–97; Varshney 1992:194.
2 Singh 1996:117.
3 Gopal 1975:14.
4 Akbar 1991:99–101. Also see Lamb 1994:1–13; 1991:4–16.
5 To begin a historical account with a legend reflects the nature of many sources on pre-Muslim Kashmir. The descent of the Kashmiri Brahmins and the early history of the Valley as described by Kalhana, the twelfth-century writer who composed the Rajatarangini – the River of Kings – is based on several different ancient sources interwoven with myths and legends. For a discussion on this see Sender 1988:1–8.
6 See Bhattacharjea 1994:19, 26–7; and, for example, Jagmohan 1991:37–9; Lal 1995; Bamzai 1994:4, 121–50.
7 Islam was, however, brought in earlier and in a gradual fashion. See Khan, 1994, pp. 66, 167, 177–204. Also see Akbar (1991, in particular pp. 18–30) on the spread of Islam in Kashmir. The Sultans were in control from 1339 to 1470 (Grover 1995:3, vol. 1).
8 *Dogras* is an elusive term. According to Lamb (1991:7) the Dogras are hill Rajputs who are most numerous in Jammu. Today, however, the term Dogras is commonly used to refer to the Hindu businessmen/families in Kashmir.
9 Henry Lawrence superintended the creation of Punjab as a 'sponsored state' after the first Sikh War in 1845. Later, it was Henry and John Lawrence who took charge of the reorganization of Punjab when James Ramsay Dalhousie was the Governor General of India. See Spear 1965:135–8.
10 The origins of the Kashmiri language has also been a subject of disagreement. Walter Lawrence believed that it originated from Sanskrit. Today, it is most commonly described as a Dardic language containing Sanskrit, Punjabi, and Arabic elements. Both Sanskrit and Dardic languages, however, belong to the Indo-Aryan language group. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica Kashmiri is the only Dardic language extensively used for literary purposes and it has a 3000–year-old tradition.
11 See Khan 1994:37 and passim. See also Simonsen 1994; Akbar 1991:4–5; Bamzai 1994:549–57. Among Hindus the shrine is known as Nand Rishi. See Jha 1996:16.
12 Bamzai, 1994:550.
13 See Verma 1994:83; Karim 1994:33.
14 See Lamb 1991:8; Lamb 1994:54–69. More correctly Poonch was given as *jagir* which is a type of fief. Kashmir was also given to Gulab Singh as *jagir*.
15 Lamb 1991:16.
16 See for example Karim 1994:39. Pahari languages belong to the Indo-Aryan branch and are spoken in various regions of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Nepal.
17 See Lamb 1991:13.
18 See Akbar 1991:69–74. The name refers to the Muslim Reading Room in Srinagar, where the meetings were held (Akbar 1991:69).
19 At the time the Maharaja was, allegedly, not allowing Muslims to perform some of their religious practices. This culminated in a radical protest by an agitator named Abdul Qadeer who was arrested for incitement. At his trial on 13 July, the police clashed with a crowd of supporters of Qadeer outside the court and the tragic killings ensued. See for example Lamb, 1991, pp. 89–90. This incident was one of the most important protests against Dogra rule and has since been honoured as Martyr's Day.

20 Lamb 1991:93. Also see Fazili 1982:10; Bamzai 1994:738–739; Bhattacharjea 1994:74–5.
21 See Fazili 1982:10; Lamb 1994:45, 132, 187; Bhattacharjea 1994:13. Also, a faction of the Muslim Conference advocated independence as late as 1947 when the party passed a resolution in the Legislative Assembly advocating accession to Pakistan. Lamb 1991:95.
22 See for example Akbar 1991:75–7; Lamb 1991:95–8; Gopal 1975:322, Vol. 1. Also, see the New Kashmir Manifesto of September 1944, part of which is quoted in Ganai 1984:9–11. The movement challenged the legality of the transfer to Gulab Singh and the manifesto was published two years before the 'Quit Kashmir' movement was launched in 1946. In connection with this latter event Abdullah was arrested, as he had been several times earlier for his agitation.
23 Bhattacharjea 1994:13–14. It should also be mentioned that the term Hindutva is today a vague label for the political project of establishing a Hindu nation. The original document *Hindutva*, where the idea of Hindu nationhood is formulated, was written by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar in jail in 1922. See for example Anderson 1987:33.
24 Interview with Gunnar Jarring 21 July 1993 and 29 July 1994.
25 For example Akbar (1991:30, 36, 71, 86, 171–2, 192, 213, 220) gives the impression that Kashmiriyat is close to an eternal concept. Lately it has become important for separatist organizations in Jammu and Kashmir to claim that they are its true custodians. Organizations arguing that Jammu and Kashmir should become independent or belong to Pakistan, refer to Kashmiriyat to lend force to their argument. The definitions are, however, usually elusive formulations such as 'Kashmiriyat is the true way of Kashmiris.' This is of course nothing new in nationalistic vocabularies and appears more frequently, the more intense the struggle. For further discussion of Kashmiriyat and a wide variety of definitions of the term, see Sinha, 1996:7 (who claims that *Kashmiriyat* was shaped as early as in the 14th century); Thomas 1992; Kaul 1995:722–6; Bhattacharjea 1994:14, 70; Kadian 1992:115–6.
26 See for example Bhattacharjea 1994:99, 119; Lamb 1991:128.
27 See for example Akbar 1991:95, 100–1; Bhattacharjea 1994:103–5. Lamb (1991:121), however, suggests that Patel was as determined as Nehru to keep Jammu and Kashmir in India. Patel's position is further analysed in Lamb 1994:69–73. Also see Mitra 1996.
28 Nehru 1936:38; See also Gopal 1975:68, vol. 1.
29 From Nehru's foreword in *Kashmir – Eden of the East* by S.N. Dhar 1945:xxvii.
30 This was an idea advocated both by Abdullah and Hari Singh. Their cooperation was, as mentioned earlier, hindered by the fact that Hari Singh had put Sheikh Abdullah in prison by the time of partition. See Lamb, 1991, pp. 132, 187, 201, 319. Both Lamb (1991:107–10) and Bhattacharjea discuss (1994:102–4) the pressure on Hari Singh to make up his mind without advocating independence.
31 See Bhattacharjea 1994:104–5; Akbar 1991:100–2; Lamb 1991:121–2.
32 See Akbar 1991:101, who quotes V.P. Menon, who presented a similar explanation in his *Story of the Integration of the Indian States,* from 1956.





33 The unit was founded in 1913 to resist attempts to penetrate the border from Russia or China. Recruitment was local but the command was British. Its officers refused to cooperate with the Governor of Gilgit, appointed by the Maharaja, who was arrested by the Scouts on 31 October. On 3 November 1947 their commander, Major W. Brown, declared that Gilgit would join Pakistan. See Lamb 1994:57, 122, 161; Lamb 1991:121–45; Bamzai 1994:766, vol. 3; Bhattacharjea 1994:126–7
34 Which is argued by, for example, Varshney 1992:194; Lamb 1991:134,143–4,162; Lamb 1994:175.
35 Which is the argument presented by Jha 1996:27–35; Akbar 1991:105–8.
36 Singh 1984:54–63.
37 See, for example Akbar 1991:112–7.
38 The full reference used by Lamb (1991:93) is V.P. Menon. 1956. *The Story of the Integration of the Indian States*, London, pp. 399–400.
39 Lamb 1994:96.
40 Summary of the conference *J&K State Leaders & Intellectuals Conference (II)*, held 26 & 27 October 1993, New Delhi.
41 Interview with Karan Singh, New Delhi, 11 November 1994. For some further analysis and more recent revelations on this topic, see Schofield 1996:144–52.
42 Jha 1996:59–74 and in particular p. 70.
43 On 1 January, 1948, the Indian representative at the UN filed a complaint against Pakistan under Article 35 of the United Nations Charter. Two weeks later Pakistan lodged its complaint, and this was followed by the first UN resolution in the Kashmir conflict on 17th and 20th January 1948. See Lamb 1991:164; Dawson 1995:23. In a private letter to Andrew Cordier, Philip Noel-Baker explains that 'Bajpai and I privately planned the action by which the cease-fire was adopted on January 1st, 1949.' Girija Shankar Bajpai was the Secretary-General of the Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Noel-Baker was the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations in 1947 and later in charge of the Kashmir question in the Security Council. After not responding to the request made by the Indian Government to the Security Council that the Government of Pakistan should be directed not to assist the Pathan invaders in 1947, Noel-Baker was considered 'unfriendly to India.' See Gopal 1975:23, 342, Vol. 3.
44 The cease-fire came into effect on 1 January 1949 and the cease-fire line was established on 27 July 1949. See Lamb 1991:161–5. Also, see Dawson 1995:36. Also see Karim 1994:10.
45 In order to maintain a neutral position in this conflict, one solution would be to refer to the part of Jammu and Kashmir controlled by Pakistan as 'Pakistani-controlled Kashmir' and the part controlled by India as 'Indian-controlled Kashmir.' In order not to make the language too formal and academic, I will mostly refer to the part of Jammu and Kashmir under the control of Pakistan as Azad Kashmir and the Northern Areas (which are the names most commonly used in Pakistan), and the part under the control of India as Jammu and Kashmir (which is the name most commonly used in India), without

implying any politically normative views by this usage. The area held by China, Aksai Chin, is not discussed here. It should also be pointed out that control over a part the Northern Areas has been transferred to China by Pakistan. The transfer has naturally been declared illegal by the Indian Government.

46 See, for example, Rose 1992:248.

47 Interviews with David Irving, 5 December 1993, 30 July 1995. The Bengal Sappers and Miners consisted mainly of Pathans, Punjab Muslims, Jat Sikhs and Hindus at the time of partition (personal communication with David Irving, 25 October 1996). For more information see the Indian Army List.

48 Interview with David Irving, 30 July 1995, and personal communication 25 October 1996. Furthermore, the Indian White Paper on Kashmir from 1948 (March) contains a copy of an article from *Dawn* where Major Khurshid Anver, who led the Frontier tribesmen in the attack on Srinagar, says that he was 'very bitter against the Pakistan Government for not having rendered any assistance to the tribesmen in their heroic bid to capture Srinagar.'

49 Interviews with David Irving, 5 December 1993, and 30 July 1995.

50 This information came to Irving through a Sikh brigadier serving with the Indian Army.

51 India Office Records, L/WS/1678:5.

52 India Office Records, L/WS/1678:11, *Telegram from the U.K. High Commissioner in Pakistan to the U.K. High Commissioner in India*, 16 July 1948.

53 Furthermore, it provides that the laws passed by the Union Parliament, according to the Union and Concurrent List, are only applicable to the state of Jammu and Kashmir with the consent of the state parliament. See Jagmohan 1994:230–54, and in particular p. 232. Also see Bakshi 1990, or any other printed copy of the Indian Constitutions and the seventh schedule. Article 370 is found in part 21 under the temporary, transitional and special provisions. The present provisions to the Constitution, however, provide that the Indian Constitution applies to Jammu and Kashmir in several areas and the most important are Article 356 (Provisions in case of failure of constitutional machinery in States), the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, the Election Commission, and the Comptroller and Auditor General. See Jagmohan 1991:233. Until the amendments made in 1966, the title of Chief Minister was known as Wazir-e-Azam (Prime Minister) and the Governor was known as Sadar-e-Riyasat (President). Furthermore, it should be mentioned that what is normally referred to as Presidents Rule in India, is regulated under Section 92 of the Jammu and Kashmir Constitution. Hence, what is almost the equivalent of President's Rule is, when applied to Jammu and Kashmir, called Governor's Rule. The debate clearly shows that a plebiscite for Jammu and Kashmir was still a seriously considered option in the late 1940s. See Dawson 1995:22–7; Lamb 1991:166–8. At present time, in India, the debate on Article 370 is quite polarized with one side arguing that the special status of Jammu and Kashmir is one of the root causes of the problems of the state, while another





argues that a high degree of autonomy is a prerequisite for the future of Jammu and Kashmir as a part of the Indian Union. The anti-Article 370 position is represented by Jagmohan, (see Jagmohan 1994, passim) and the BJP, and the pro-autonomy position is advocated by Farooq Abdullah today.

54 See Akbar 1991:136–7.

55 For a comprehensive discussion and elaboration on what constitutes a soft state see Blomkvist 1988, passim.

56 Lamb 1991:167–70.

57 See Jarring 1983:109–40. Interviews with Gunnar Jarring, 21 July 1993 and 29 July 1994.

58 Jarring 1983:116. My translation. Also see *Time*, March 4 1957:27, on Menon's collapse.

59 Jarring 1983:115.

60 See A.M. Rosenthal. 'Krishna Menon – A Clue to Nehru,' *The New York Times*, 7 April 1957.

61 See Lamb, 1991 (in particular see pp.182–213), and Gopal 1975 vol. 3 (in particular pp. 131–3) for some of the more detailed accounts of events at this time.

62 See the documents on discussions between Richard Leach, the First Secretary of the American Embassy in India and B.P.L. Bedi, a person 'closely associated with Abdullah,' in Confidential U.S. State Department Central files. India, Internal affairs, 1950–1954. Foreign Service Despatch, No. 649, *Observations of B.P.L. Bedi on the Situation in Kashmir*, 8 October 1953, (791.521/10 -853). According to the minutes taken by Leach, Bedi claimed that the National Conference Executive Committee adopted a resolution on 18 May 'supporting accession to India and the Implementation of the Delhi Agreement of July, 1952.' However, and quite surprisingly, Bedi claims (according to Leach's account) that it was Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed who presented a resolution to the Working Committee of the National Conference (consisting of eight people including Beg, Abdullah, and Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed – for more information on 'the Inner Eight', see Akbar 1991:151) 'proposing that independence for Kashmir should be considered in the Indo-Pakistan negotiations.' Furthermore, it says that '[t]his was seconded by Beg. Abdullah himself supported the move, but only after those cited above.' The information in the account that follows is unclear: 'Early in June, Bakshi got his instructions in Delhi. Since a meeting of the Working Committee, scheduled for late August, would take up the resolution Bakshi had to move rapidly in order to prevent exposure and elimination along with Beg and Abdullah. The Abdullah ouster was the result.' If Leach's and Bedi's accounts are true, the more common picture of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed as the main objector within the National Conference to the independence position is not entirely correct (see for example Hewitt 1995:140–1; Akbar 1991:146–53). Consequently, in Leach's account, Abdullah becomes the 'fall guy' for Bakshi's actions. On the other hand, it is also possible that Bedi might have fed Leach with incorrect information in order to clear Abdullah from accusations.

63 Splits within the party led to the formation of the Democratic National Conference in 1957. This group, however, reunited with the National Conference in 1958.
64 See Lamb 1991:202–3; Dawson 1995:142–3; Blinkenberg 1972:201–2; Gupta 1966:310–5.
65 Jarring 1983:116.
66 Ibid., 117. When Dixon and Lodge asked Jarring to 'solve the problem' they did so with a grain of irony in their voices since everyone was aware of the difficulty of this task. Personal communication with Jarring, late October 1996.
67 Relations between India and America were not entirely bad. For example, the two countries cooperated in the UN on the question of prisoners of war in Korea, as well as in the situation which developed during the Suez crisis in 1956. This was, however, immediately followed by the Soviet suppression of against the uprising in Hungary, when Krishna Menon voted against the U.S. resolution condemning the Soviet action. This was a major breakdown in the relationship between the two countries, according to Indian diplomat Arthur Lall 1981:133–7.
68 This is indicated in Department of State Intelligence Report No. 7448, 25 February 1957 (W02. 552 S #7448); Department of State Intelligence Report No. 5781, 31 January 1952 (097.3 21192 #5781). See also Department of State Intelligence Report 7 April 1955 (W 02 5525 #6885).
69 This is indicated in Department of State Intelligence Report No. 7448, 25 February 1957 (W02. 552 S #7448); Department of State Intelligence Report No.5781, 31 January 1952 (097.3 21192 #5781).
70 Department of State, Office of Intelligence Research, Report No. 5526, 1951 (097.3 Z1092, #5526/51).
71 Interview with Jarring 1994. See also Jarring 1983:118.
72 Philip Noel-Baker was Secretary of Commonwealth Relations in 1947 and in charge of the Kashmir question in the UN Security Council. The letter was sent to Andrew Cordier on 26 February 1957.
73 Jarring 1983:121.
74 In order to improve the prospects of Jarring's mission, the General Secretary of the Foreign Ministry, N.R. Pillai, advised Jarring to avoid Menon and talk directly to Nehru. In other words, Menon was considered controversial not only in the UN, but also at home (Jarring 1983:126–8). This was, however, not possible since Menon was at Nehru's side most of the time.
75 See Jarring 1983:130–5.
76 See Gunnar Jarring *Report on the India-Pakistan Question Submitted in Pursuance of the Resolution of the Security Council of 21 February, 1957 (S/3793)*, S/3821, 29 April 1957.
77 See for example Rao 1991:102–105. India received military assistance in the war from the United Kingdom and the USA, which may have improved relations with the West somewhat. See Gupta 1966:352; Blinkenberg 1972:234.
78 Lamb 1991:179.
79 Akbar 1991:157, 156–73. It should be added that Ved Metha's (1970:137) translation is 'Hair of the Prophet.' Also Ved Metha's account of the events during the Hazratbal crisis is more detailed (1993:128–64) than Akbar's.
80 In other words, a regional branch of the Congress party. See Puri 1993:31. The Plebiscite Front, founded by Mirza Afzal Beg in 1955, was also harassed by the Congress party and Beg spent several years in jail, just as Abdullah did. The demand by Beg for self-determination was supported by Sheikh Abdullah. See Ganai 1984:37.
81 Bhattacharjea 1994:207.
82 The local name for his regime was the BBC, standing for Bakshi Brothers Corporation, which suggests the widespread nepotism. See Bhattacharjea 1994:205, 205–20, for a description of Bakshi's rule.
83 Bhattacharjea 1994:213.
84 The Kamaraj plan was named after its creator, the Chief Minister of Madras K. Kamaraj, and the idea was that all Chief Ministers should hand in their resignations. The Prime Minister would then have the opportunity to choose which applications to accept in order to reduce corruption in the party. See Gopal 1975:244–9, vol. 3. Bakshi was replaced by Khwaja Shamsuddin in October 1963. Shamsuddin, however, had to be replaced by G.M. Sadiq (the aforementioned colleague of Abdullah) immediately after the Hazratbal crisis.
85 Akbar 1991:158.
86 Kadian 1992:123; Lamb 1991: 85–90, 206, 257; Blinkenberg 1972:291–2.
87 This office was held by the Maharaja Hari Singh's son, Karan Singh, at the time.
88 See, for example, Jaswant Singh 1996, passim, and in particular pp. 281–2. Also see Lamb 1991:247–51; Bhattacharjea 1994:225–31.
89 Lamb 1991:247, 251–2.
90 See Blinkenberg 1972:238–64. This scheme seems to have been 'inspired through President Ayub Khan by Z.A. Bhutto' according to Lamb 1991:153, 252–6, 258–61.
91 Kadian 1992:130; Lamb 1991:264–6; Blinkenberg 1972:248–84. Both sides agreed to a cease fire and the resolution adopted by the Security Council on 27 September meant that the effect that the cease-fire line of 1948 was again the border between India and Pakistan. A few hours after the signing of the Tashkent declaration the Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri suffered a heart attack and died.
92 Bakshi, however, made a brief comeback as the leader of what was left of the National Conference. See Blinkenberg 1972:297–298; Singh and Bose 1987:160–76, for detailed results.
93 See Blinkenberg 1972:298–301; Lamb 1991:285.
94 See, for example, Blinkenberg 1972:310; Lamb 1991:283–4.
95 For a more detailed discussion on these events see Blinkenberg 1972:304–9; Lamb 1991:285–95. According to Lamb, relations between India and Pakistan before the Ganga incident were not 'particularly strained' and the affair came 'out of the blue.' Lamb 1991:289.
96 Lamb 1991:294.
97 See Kadian 1992:134–7; Lamb 1991:296–7. A copy of the accord can be found in, for example, in Chopra 1988:269–70.

98 Kadian 1992:135–6; Bhattacharjea 1994:233–7; Akbar 1991:185–90.
99 Bhattacharjea 1994:237.
100 The Emergency, declared under Article 352 of the Constitution, was introduced on 26 June 1975. It was gradually relaxed from December 1976, and ended with the full restoration of democracy by the Janata government in 1977. See Brass 1991:40–3.

## 4 THE RISE AND FALL OF DEMOCRACY IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR 1977–1989

1 A shorter version of this chapter appeared in Asian Survey in 1997 (@ 1997 by The Regents of the University of California. Reprinted from *Asian Survey*, Vol. 37, No. 11, pp. 1005–30, by permission of the Regents.) and in the book *Community Conflicts and the State in India* from 1998 (Reproduced from *Community Conflicts and the State in India* (Eds. Amrita Basu and Atul Kohli. 1998. New Delhi: Oxford University Press) by arrangement with Oxford University Press, India.).
2 Research in democracy shows democracy's chances of surviving increase the longer it exists (see for example Parry 1994:53–5; Hadenius 1994:82) Based on this reasoning the relative success of India's democracy has been attributed to the long period during which democracy was gradually introduced under the colonial rule.
3 Akbar 1991:138–42. Also see Ganai 1984:16; Verma 1994:38–42; Ganai 1984:16; Varshney, 1992:212; Lamb 1991:192–3.
4 Akbar 1991:192.
5 Interviews with Balraj Puri and B.K. Nehru in 1994. Reintegration had begun by 1971 according to Balraj Puri (see 'Kashmir Heading towards a relapse?,' *Nagpur Times*, 4 August 1982).
6 Interview with Singh 27 October 1994. Most the Kashmiris interviewed who are active in politics, including many of those who are today critical towards the central government, agree that the 1977 elections were free and fair (for example: interview with Bilal Ahmad Lodhi, J&K High Court 21 November 1994; interview with Abdul Ghani Lone, 10 November 1994, who also supports Singh's view on the role of Morarji Desai; this view on the 1977 election is also supported by journalists writing on J&K politics, for example Askari Zaidi of the *Times of India* (interview with Zaidi 7 November 1994).
7 The Jamaat-e-Islami was founded in the early 1940s and contested elections for the first time in 1972. It advocates a state ruled according to the principles of Islam and accession to Pakistan.
8 The Maulana Abbas Ansari, who is also the leader of the Shia organization Ittehad, and his associates have also been in conflict with the Jamaat-e-Islami when trying to cooperate under the MUF-umbrella organization after the 1987 election.
9 Interview with the Maulana Abbas Ansari 1994.
10 See Puri 1993:45–50, for an interesting account of this idea. Also see R.K. Mishra, 'Opposition Parties and Farooq Abdullah,' *Patriot*, 11 July 1984, for a view in line with that of Nehru and Indira Gandhi.
11 B.K. Nehru also supports this argument in the interview which took place on 14 November 1994.





12 See Dahl 1971:43.
13 This is an assessment based on interviews with Puri 1994; Singh 1994; B.K. Nehru 1994; newspaper cuttings from the period 1975–1992; and to some extent statistics provided by the Ministry of Home Affairs published in Wirsing 1994.
14 According to Lamb it is possible to regard Amanullah Khan's organization as an 'informal offshoot' of Beg's Plebiscite Front. See Lamb 1991:292.
15 See chapter three.
16 See Staff Correspondent, 'Kidnappers from P.O.K.: Farooq' *Tribune*, 7 February 1984.
17 Interview with Khan in 1994. This view was confirmed in a later interview in 1996. IOK is the abbreviation for India Occupied Kashmir and in Pakistan and among separatists in India it is the name frequently used for the part of Jammu and Kashmir that is controlled by India.
18 Ibid.
19 B.K. Nehru for example says that Jammu and Kashmir was already a mismanaged state at that time, but it was also a peaceful state (interview with Nehru 14 November 1994). Also see Puri 1993:50; Akbar 1991:192; Varshney 1992:218; interview with Khan, 1994.
20 Interview with Singh 27 October 1994.
21 See 'RSS, NC link in poll?,' *Patriot*, 8 November 1978; 'RSS faction backs Sheikh,' *Patriot*, 9 January 1979; 'Pro-Sheikh RSS man defeated,' *Patriot*, 8 March 1979. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and the Bharatiya Janata Party are political organizations that can be described as Hindu-dominated and, to different degrees, Hindu-chauvinistic.
22 'BJP, NC may end alliance,' *Hindustan Times*, 8 January 1982.
23 This conclusion is based on the interviews made with the political figures who were active in the area and on newspaper articles from 1975–1991.
24 Hurriyat means freedom and the Hurriyat Conference is today an umbrella-organization for many of the separatist, or accessionist, organizations in Jammu and Kashmir.
25 Interview with Lone 10 November 1994. In consequence of the events of the late 1980s, Lone became one of the leaders for the armed separatist movement. B.K. Nehru recalls one incident when the dismissal of Abdullah was rumoured. Lone visited Nehru and declared that he was an enemy of the Abdullah family, but he also added that 'if you remove Farooq as the rumours say you plan, I will be the first to lead a movement against this.' (interview with B.K. Nehru 14 November 1994).
26 A few months earlier, the same year, Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg, the legendary leader of the Plebiscite Front and the companion of Sheikh Abdullah until 1978, died.
27 See Swaminathan S. Aiyar, 'Korean Miracle in Kashmir?,' *Hindustan Times*, 27 August 1981, for a discussion on economic growth and the public administration in Jammu and Kashmir.
28 See Balraj Puri, 'Kashmir's Declining Development' *Nagpur Times*, 2 July 1979.
29 Interview with Askari Zaidi 1994. See also, for example, 'J&K govt encouraging pro-Pak elements: MP,' *Times of India*, 23 March 1982,

on charges of corruption against Sheikh Abdullah's ministry. The article by Aiyar in *Hindustan Times*, 27 August 1981, however, argues that corruption declined in the public administration when Sheikh Abdullah was Chief Minister.

30 This opinion was expressed to B.K. Nehru by Sheikh Abdullah. Interview with B.K. Nehru, 14 November 1994.

31 Instead, the position was given to Sheikh Nazir Ahmed, who was the adopted son of Sheikh Abdullah. Jammu Correspondent, 'Twin Challenges to Kashmir C.M.,' *The Hindu*, 9 December 1982. Ghulam Mohammed Shah resigned from Sheikh Abdullah's cabinet in August 1982.

32 UNI, 'Cooperation of Congress (I) welcomed,' *Times of India* (Delhi), 13 September 1982; INFA, 'Congress (I), N.C. understanding,' *Tribune* (Chandigarh), 3 October 1982.

33 See for example 'Sheikh Abdullahs' dangerous game,' *The Hindu* (Gurgaw), 4 June 1982.

34 Lamb claims that Congress (I) demanded 23 seats and Puri claims 15. According to Puri, Farooq Abdullah could not offer more than 5 seats without risking a backlash from within the party, the electorate in the Valley and his mother.

35 As the political scientist Ashutosh Varshney points out, if this conviction was true in 1983, it was tragically forgotten in 1986 when the party did join hands with the Congress (I) for the 1987 elections – with devastating results. Varshney 1992:220.

36 Varshney 1992:219, points out that the Congress Party increasingly made use of communal messages in the 1983 election campaign. For important contributions and observations in connection with this discussion see 'Awami alliance may cost Dr. Abdullah dearly in Jammu,' *Statesman*, 30 May 1983; K.K. Katya, 'Rules of the Game,' *Hindustan Times*, 30 May 1983; K.R. Sundar Rajan, 'Communalism in Kashmir,' *Tribune*, 30 May 1983.

37 Here it would be possible to try to turn the argument around by suggesting that maybe the extremist parties received so few votes because the extremist positions were taken by the more established parties (i.e. the Congress party and the National Conference). Studying the political language of this period does not give support to that conclusion, however, although the competition was fierce. Furthermore, the vote in this election was more evenly split between the main contenders, suggesting that the Congress party captured votes in areas traditionally held by the National Conference.

38 See 'Election Rules being Violated in Kashmir,' *Statesman* (Delhi), 20 May 1983.; 'Repoll ordered in two polling stations,' *Statesman* (Delhi), 6 June 1983.;'Doda Poll Officer Replaced,' in *Statesman* (Delhi), 8 June 1983.; 'Cong-I urges repoll in 18 constituencies,' *Indian Express* (Delhi), 9 June 1983; Bhardwaj, Brij, 'Protest against poll 'rigging' in J&K,' *Hindustan Times*, 11 June 1983.

39 'Abdullah's Triumph,' *Indian Express*, 11 June 1983. It is quite telling to compare reactions of this type with the reactions after the 1987 election. It seems that Farooq Abdullah's rule was accepted for the same reasons that his father's election victory was accepted in 1951 as was mentioned earlier.





40 Jagmohan, today an active politician in the BJP, is one of India's best known civil servants and has served twice as Governor in Jammu and Kashmir.

41 Varshney 1992:232.

42 At 10.30 p.m. according to Jagmohan 1991 p. 276. Abdullah and Akbar, however, claim that this message was delivered at 11:30 a.m. See Akbar 1991:209; Abdullah 1985:3.

43 Devi Das Thakur was the Finance Minister in Jammu and Kashmir until removed from the Cabinet by Farooq Abdullah in 1982. Jagmohan 1994:276.

44 See Jagmohan 1991:284–5, 290–2; Abdullah 1985:1–4; Interview with Jagmohan, 16 December 1994.

45 Arun Nehru claims that he was in favour of Governor's rule. Interview with Arun Nehru, 14 December 1994.

46 Jagmohan 1991:293.

47 'Revolt in the making,' *Tribune*, 2 September 1983.

48 Interview with Devi Das Thakur, 3 December 1994.

49 Shah's convention elected Khalida Shah, Farooq Abdullah's sister and G.M. Shah's wife, as their official leader.

50 See Jagmohan 1991:30; Grover 1995:23, Vol. 3.

51 Lamb 1991:329.

52 Abdullah 1985:44.

53 See for example 'Concern over Srinagar Violence,' *Hindustan Times*, 16 October 1983.

54 'Mrs. Gandhi hints at strong action,' *Times of India*, 5 January 1984; 'Pakistan may invade Kashmir: Rajiv,' *Tribune* (Chandigarh), 7 February 1984;' Dr Abdullah was member of Liberation Front,' *Statesman* (Delhi), 28 February 1984.

55 Interview with B.K. Nehru 1994.

56 See '63 Cong men hurt in lathicharge,' *Hindustan Times*, 6 January 1984; 'Congress (I) to continue stir in Jammu-Kashmir,' *The Hindu* (Gurgaw), 11 January 1984; 'Six Congressmen killed in firing,' *Times of India*, 15 January 1984.

57 Interview with Arun Nehru 1994.

58 Abdullah 1985:9.

59 The letter from B.K. Nehru to Farooq Abdullah on 27 January 1982, published in Jagmohan 1994:294–5, supports this interpretation. This is further discussed in Widmalm 1997a.

60 Interview with Arun Nehru 1994.

61 Ibid.

62 A list of the defectors is provided in Jagmohan: 1991:281, and Abdullah 1985:68–9. See also 'D.D. Thakur is Deputy C.M.,' *Tribune*, 4 July 1984; 'A Breach of all norms of democracy,' *Statesman* (Delhi), 4 July 1984.

63 See 'Farooq govt dismissal not 'unconstitutional',' *Indian Express* (Delhi), 27 July 1984; 'Grave situation was developing in Kashmir: Rao,' *Hindustan Times*, 27 July 1984.

64 *Indian Express*, 27 July 1984.

65 See for example, Puri 1993:34; Varshney 1992:219; Ganguly 1992; Ganguly and Bajpai 1994; '/.../ in Kashmir,' *The Hindu* (Gurgaw), 4

July 1984; 'A Breach of all norms of democracy,' *Statesman* (Delhi), 4 July 1984; G.K. Reddy, 'Office of dignity or proxy of centre?,' *The Hindu* (Gurgaw), 8 July 1984; K.K. Katyal, 'Srinagar experiment and a Punjab parallel,' *The Hindu* (Gurgaw), 9 July, 1984; Noorani, A.G., 'The Coup in Kashmir,' *Indian Express,* 10 July 1984. For an opposing view to this interpretation see R.K. Mishra, 'Opposition Parties and Farooq Abdullah,' *Patriot,* 11 July 1984; N.C. Menon, 'Kashmir: A Stitch In Time,' *Hindustan Times*, 11 July 1984. Mishra and Menon argue that the removal of Farooq Abdullah was necessary in order to preserve national security.

66 In other words, there is no proof that the Congress (I) opposed Farooq Abdullah and the National Conference because of the fact that the Congress (I) is Hindu-dominated and the National Conference is Muslim-dominated.

67 See for example Kohli, 1990, pp. 28–32. This, to some extent, resembles Brass' explanation of the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir. See Brass 1994:215–27, and in particular p. 225.

68 This important observation is made by Akbar 1991:203.

69 N.T. Rama Rao, however, had to be reinstalled very shortly after he was removed.

70 On the misuse and use of President's Rule in India (and Governor's Rule in the case of Jammu and Kashmir) see Kathuria 1990. Also see Deshta 1993. The next chapter will discuss why the CPI(M) government in West Bengal was able to resist such attempts by the central government to intervene in the 1980s.

71 Interview with Chandra Shekar, 28 October 1994. This is a fact that was also mentioned in the interviews with B.K. Nehru 1994, and Arun Nehru 1994.

72 Interview with Shekar 1994.

73 Interview, B.K. Nehru 1994.Other sources (for example the interview with D.D. Thakur 1994) also support the argument that the Iqbal Park incident was an important beginning to the conflict between Farooq Abdullah and Indira Gandhi.

74 Interview with Jagmohan, 16 December 1994.

75 See for example, 'Centre's Concern over law & order in Kashmir,' *Statesman* (Delhi), 19 August 1984; 'Rift in Cong-NC alliance' *Times of India,* 9 June 1985.

76 Assessment made by the author based on news cuttings covering the period from 1975 to 1995.

77 See for example 'Fundamentalists 'recruit' youths,' *Tribune* (Chandigarh), 18 September 1985; 'Shiv Sena Gaining Strength in Jammu,' *Times of India*, 17 January 1986

78 'Shah ready to join hands with Jamaat,' *Tribune* (Chandigarh), 30 January 1987.

79 'Every Kashmiri is a Pakistani: G.M. Shah,' *Hindustan Times*, 3 September 1987.

80 See 'Cong (I)-Farooq pact on Assembly Seats?,' *Tribune* (Chandigarh), 2 February 1987. Also see Butler 1996:194.

81 Actually, in the 1983 election, the effective number of components was 3.2 if we look at the share of the vote, and 2.5 if we count the share of





the seats (see Tagepeera and Shugart 1989:77–81 for the formulas used). Measurements based on the Herfindahl-Hirschman concentration index, however, are problematical when describing systems where two parties dominate, e.g. together they may receive around 70 percent of the support of the voters, but a substantial share of the remaining support may be distributed between a very large number of small parties and/or independent candidates. Considering the weak support for parties other than the National Conference and the Congress (I) in 1983, it is therefore more accurate simply to use the term 'two-party dominated system.'

82 On the topic of Grand Coalitions, see Lijphart 1977:25–36.

83 Lijphart 1996:258–68.

84 Editorial. 'Congress-NC alliance,' *Patriot*, 4 February 1987.

85 Interview with Dethe, 7 November 1994.

86 See for example 'Muslim Front Cracking Up,' *Indian Express* (Delhi), 23 November 1986; 'Cracks in MUF over J&K accession to India,' *Times of India* (Delhi), 22 November 1986; 'Mirwaiz calls MUF communalist,' *Indian Express* (Delhi), 20 February 1987.

87 Puri 1993:35.

88 'Muslim Front Cracking Up,' *Indian Express* (Delhi), 23 November 1986.

89 See for example Desmond 1993:26.

90 The numbers were higher than average participation in either the Vidhan Sabha elections or the Lok Sabha elections.

91 There is some confusion regarding the nominating party for two of the cartel's candidates. Depending on which sources one uses, the number of seats for Congress (I) was between 25 and 27, and the number of seats for the National Conference between 39 and 41. See Butler, Lahiri and Roy 1991: and Election Commission of India 1987.

92 The author could confirm that the seals were still present and unbroken on the boxes containing the ballots from Handwara, stored in the records room at the High Court in Srinagar, on 21 November, 1994. Badhwar 1987, also supports Lone«s story of the rigging in the Handwara constituency. The problem of an overloaded judiciary system is serious but also general in India.

93 Interviews with Mian Abdul Qayoom, Advocate and President of the Kashmir Bar Association, Srinagar, 21 November 1994, who claims he was an eyewitness to attempts to interfere with the counting of votes in Sopore. The Sopore seat was (not as a result of rigging according to Qayoom) finally won by Syed Ali Shah Geelani, who is the Jamaat-e-Islami leader. The votes from three other constituencies were also counted here and this is where the irregularities occurred, according to Qayoom. Again the Deputy Inspector-General of Police Ali Mohammed Watali and the Divisional Commissioner Hamidullah Khan are accused of acting on Farooq Abdullah's orders to rig results against MUF-candidates. From interviews with other candidates in these elections and lawyers at the J&K High Court, it seems that at least six election petitions were filed after the 1987 elections and no action was taken in any case. There are of course, problems in verifying these sources because of the present situation in Kashmir. The

Election Commission in New Delhi does not make any comment regarding the 1987 Jammu and Kashmir State Assembly Election. Mian Abdul Qayoom was shot in the stomach on April 22 1995.

94 Information given to the Times of India journalist Askari Zaidi. Interview with Zaidi 1994.

95 Express News Service, '8 Muf men charged under Terrorist Act,' *Indian Express* (Delhi), 9 March 1987.

96 See Badhwar 1987:41. This articles is also quite detailed on other accounts of rigging in Jammu and Kashmir in 1987.

97 'Top MUF leaders arrested,' *Hindustan Times*, 26 March 1987.

98 See for example 'MUF tables copies of 'fake votes',' *Statesman* (Delhi), 2 April 1987.

99 Interview with Abdul Ghani Lone 1994.

100 A summary and discussion of the study is found in Baweja 1994:120–2.

101 Interview with Amanullah Khan 1994.

102 See for example Badhwar 31 May 1989:36.

103 M. Syed Shah, 'Statement Submitted to the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly,' 25 October 1989.

104 Ibid.

105 As was mentioned in chapter three, Pandit is a common term for the Kashmiri Brahmins, but it can also be a title of a learned person. Also, Dogra is a common term for the Hindu business community in Jammu and Kashmir. See chapter three, footnote eight.

106 See Jha 1991:34–7. Also see Bose et al. 1990, for information on job discrimination against Muslims in Jammu and Kashmir.

107 For example, when Article 312 (which regulates the All-India services, the so-called 'steel frame' of the Indian bureaucracy') came to include Jammu and Kashmir in 1958 it was the decided 'that 50 percent of the personnel would be recruited' from the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) and 50 percent from the state service. However, implementation of this special arrangement did not begin until 1968 (see Bose et al. 1990:661). It should be noted that Kadian mentions that during the time when Syed Mir Qasim was Chief Minister (1971–1975) a large number of officers from the central civil service were brought into the state to replace Kashmiris, Dogras, and Punjabis. No particular increase in discrimination against Muslims during the 1980s is mentioned. See Kadian 1992:136.

108 In my interviews with people, and in particular political leaders, from Jammu and Kashmir, no one brought such changes to my attention.

109 Verma 1994:187–9. Actually there has even been a slight overrepresentation of Muslims in the State Assembly in the late-1980s. This may be compared to the extreme underrepresentation of women, which is more seldom mentioned in the 'discrimination debate.' For example, after the 1987 election there was only one woman represented in the State Assembly. See Verma 1994:185.

110 This phenomenon is known in psychology as hysteresis and is amply expressed by Bentham who said that 'It is worse to lose than simply not to gain.'





111 Jha 1991:35.

112 For example, if we look at the leadership of the JKLF in the mid-1990s, Yasin Malik, a former student, would most likely fit Jha's description, while Javed Mir, a former professional plumber, would not.

113 See, for example Rekhi, 1993:228.

114 The data on socioeconomic development were gathered from Rekhi 1993; Butler, Lahiri and Roy 1991 and 1996; Bose 1991; and Chandhok 1990. For more details see Widmalm 1997a. Furthermore, it should be mentioned that in 1978 Jammu and Kashmir was the only state in India where crime rates fell drastically. See 'Crime rate falls in J&K,' *Hindustan Times*, 20 May 1979.

115 Naturally one has to be aware that infant mortality is affected by both long-term and short-term development.

116 Prasad 1993:60. Also see Butler, Lahiri and Roy 1991 and 1996.

117 Unemployment rates, when no other source is mentioned, have been collected from Statistical Abstract India from 1977 to 1992.

118 See *Statististical Outline of India* by Bhandare and Mukhopadhyay, 1995. Factory employment in Jammu and Kashmir was 11,000 in 1971, 20,000 in 1980, 26,000 in 1985 and (provisionally) 27,000 in 1990.

119 Shah 1992.

120 See Misri and Bhat 1994:268–9; Karim 1994:219–20; Shah 1992:13.

121 The Government of India estimates that the Valley is losing approximately Rs. 5,000,000,000 each year because of the conflict. See *Jammu and Kashmir: A Development Profile*. 1995. Department of Information – Jammu and Kashmir Government. Data provided by Sharma and Mishra 1995 clearly show how violence has affected tourism.

122 When the author visited this area in 1996, gun-runners would guarantee delivery of arms to any place I desired – as long as the price was right of course. In 2000 the PakistanOrdnance Factories decided to build an arms factory in Darra Adam Khel to provide jobs to the 'skilled youth of the area.' See 'Pak Arms Factory,' *The Times of India*, 30 October 2000.

123 See Indian Defence Review, July 1989.

124 See for example Kumar's *Kashmir – Pakistan's Proxy War* (no year of publication stated); Peer Giyas Ud-Din 1992:55–7; Maheshwari 1993:13, 51–2; Nanda 1994:300–3. Wirsing (1994:114 and in particular endnote one on page 306) makes several interesting observations on this issue.

125 See Wirsing 1994 (in particular pp. 113–8), for elaboration on this.

126 I think that this is what the author Jan Guillou has named 'the useful idiot.' A useful idiot is someone to whom the political elite can feed information which is close enough to the truth to be plausible, but still hides the real facts. The useful idiot enthusiastically channels the information to, for example, the media, believing he/she has made a scoop, while in fact he/she has only been a useful instrument to the real power holders who have managed to divert attention from facts that, if they were disclosed, would attract much more attention. Undoubtedly this is a problem of which any researcher in the social sciences should be aware.

127 For an interesting inside account of these events see Arif 1995:397–409.
128 Interview with Mirza Aslam Beg, 25 March 1996.
129 Interview with Muhammad Asad Durrani, 18 December 1995.
130 Ibid.
131 At least it was as late as in 1996.
132 For an interesting report on this, see, for example, 'Mujahedeen chief in Pak to seek more support,' *Indian Express*, 17 November 1994, on support from Pakistan to Al Mujahedeen, 17 November, 1994.
133 Renan 1990:11.
134 Most of these factors agree with the conclusions reached by Kohli 1990 in his study of the problem of governability in India. Furthermore, in relation to the question of long-term perspectives (*e*) there is a similarity to studies of interest rates and how to describe the calculations that lead to long-term investments. I refer mainly to the parallel discussion on *expected utility* in the field of economics which has been one of the strongest theoretical approaches to the explanation of individual behaviour with regard to risk (see for example Battalio, Kagel, and Jirnyakul 1990, and Machina 1982. North 1990, gives a brief and clear description of expected-utility theory but relies to a large extent on later work by Machina). Douglass North goes beyond the traditional critique of expected utility models and argues that not only do the models fail to recognize that individual decisions are made with far less knowledge than the assumption of complete information. Human interrelations are also shaped by institutions and cultural filters and the main point is that 'institutions exist to reduce the uncertainties involved in human interaction' (North 1990:17–26, 37). This, I think comes out as an important element in the present attempt to explain the breakdown of democracy in Jammu and Kashmir. North claims that functioning institutions reduce uncertainties and the importance of the institutional factor can be expressed in a more concise fashion with regard to political processes (The following presentation bears a clear resemblance to the present-value ratio calculation. See Ljung 1986:44–54.). If it is believed that a long-term investment in politics is likely to produce future returns, policies which produce long-term development are more likely to be adopted. On the other hand, a high level of uncertainty is more likely to create a political situation that encourages policies mainly designed to plunder the resources of the state apparatus or whatever resources the political position provides access to, for short-term and narrow gains. So, the factor determining policies on a more general level is the character of institutions. Simply put, if political actors trust the stability of institutions, long-term development policies are more likely (see also, for example, Putnam 1993:171–6; Shapin 1994:8–17).
135 In India the word communal is most often used to label political strategies aimed at mobilizing groups along caste lines, but it is also used to describe mobilization of different religious groups against each other. In a sense, it is as vaguely and widely used as the word ethnic in the West. And, just like ethnic, communal is often used pejoratively in the political language. Thus, there are good reasons to be careful with the term in a social science analysis. Naturally, it is also possible that communalism also can cause de-institutionalization.





## 5 AVOIDING VIOLENT SEPARATISM IN INDIA

1 Horowitz 1985. See chapter two in this book for a brief discussion of this and how it is related to Down's ideas on spatial competition.
2 In Kohli and Basu 1999, Kohli, pursues an analysis comparing Tamil Nadu, Jammu and Kashmir, and Punjab. Kohli also emphasizes the important role of the central government in his explanation of the rise as well as the decline of separatist movements in these states.
3 See Hirschman 1970, and chapter one in Hirschman 1995. Hirschman's work was also incorporated in the more advanced theories on nationalism developed by Rokkan (1975).
4 Rokkan 1975.
5 This point is also made by Varshney 1992:219, and Ganguly 1996:92–3.
6 See Viswanathan 1996:123–5.
7 'AIADMK for formulating progressive policies,' *The Hindu*, 1 April 1996.
8 Besides the interviews presented, the following section on the historical background of the Dravidian movement is mainly based on the accounts of Marguerite Ross Barnett (1976) *The Politics of Cultural Nationalism in South India*, and Robert L. Hardgrave Jr. (1979), *Essays in the Political Sociology of South India*. In South India the main varna categories are Brahmin, Shudra and Untouchables or Adi-Dravida which may be translated as 'first Dravidians.' See Barnett 1976:41. Also see Dirks 1996.
9 Barnett 1976:22. Also see Dirks 1996, and Washbrook 1989:204–64, for a discussion on the Brahmin vs Non-Brahmin polarization in Tamil Nadu.
10 See Hardgrave 1979, chapter two. See also Barnett 1976:32; Washbrook 1989:204–64.
11 Barnett traces the demand for Dravida Nadu back to the 1920s.
12 Dravida Nadu may be translated as the Land of the Dravidians. The Dravidian states today include Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. In the northern states, most of the languages are Indo-European.
13 Barnett 1976:52.
14 See for example Barnett 1976:76. Barnett argues that Annadurai was supported in his own right and that several followers joined him in protest against Naicker's autocratic style of leadership. Also, Barnett mentions that many left with Annadurai in protest against Naicker's decision to designate his fiancée (a party-worker more than forty years younger) his successor as party leader.
15 Barnett 1976:80–82; Hardgrave 1979:37–9.
16 See Barnett 1976:93–4.
17 Varshney 1992:219.

18 Interview with Murasoli Maran in Madras, 1 April 1996.
19 Interview with Era Sezhiyan in Madras, 4 April, 1996.
20 Dirks 1996:281–282. See also Washbrook 1989:213–4.
21 Of course, this is not meant to imply that violence did not occur during the language riots. The language riots were violent and included incidents when students burned themselves to death in protest. The point is that there is a difference between riots that can be considered uncoordinated outbursts of anger and violence as a strategy pursued by the top strata of the leaders of political parties and organizations.
22 Hardgrave points out (1979:51) that in the early 1950s the DMK had directed most of its efforts to gain influence towards channels outside the democratic framework. In order to survive and to fight the DK/Congress alliance, the DMK had to accept constitutional procedures.
23 Murasoli Maran is still one of the most important leaders of the DMK and he has also been a minister in the BJP governments since 1998. Era Sezhiyan left the DMK in the 1970s but is still active in the Janata Dal in Tamil Nadu.
24 Barnett 1976:109. Hardgrave also quotes an interview in 1961, where Sampath declares that he first expressed his doubts about Dravidasthan in 1958 (Hardgrave 1979:69–70). But Sampath continued to advocate the creation of a Tamil autonomous state with the right to secede after he left the DMK in 1961 and formed the Tamil Nationalist Party. See also Barnett 1976:113–4.
25 Hardgrave 1979:54.
26 See Barnett 1976:99. During in-fighting in competition for the party leadership, mainly between Sampath and Karunanidhi, Nedunchezhian replaced Annadurai as a compromise in 1955.
27 Barnett 1976:109. V.P. Raman was one of the few Brahmins in the leadership or even in the party at all.
28 Barnett 1976:109–13.
29 Barnett mentions that separatist demands arose briefly again in 1968. Barnett 1976:115.
30 Today some violent separatist organisations exists, for example the Tamil Nadu Liberation Army, that demand a separate Tamil nation. They are, however, not so large or supported that they can be said to be threatening the cohesion of the region. See Bhanutej, N. 'The Captor as Captor,' *The Week*, 17 September 2000.
31 Hirschman 1995:14.
32 It should also be noted that almost all the states of India express certain anti-centre sentiments. As one political observer explained 'If you are a state politician, you have to be anti-centre to some extent in order to have credibility.'
33 I would emphasize that I do not mean that West Bengal has had no problems with groups organized along lines of regional identity or on the extremes on the left-right scale. Two examples of such problems are the Gurkha movement and the conflicts connected to it in the 1980s and the Naxalite movement and accompanying violence in the late 1960s and the 1970s. See, for example, Basu, 1992. The point is that there are nevertheless no movements that are based on general Bengali identity and there are virtually no demands for a separate Bengali state.





34 Ruud (1996) provides several very interesting points about this 'paradox.'
35 Gordon 1979:11. Leonard Gordon, who is a historian, points out how the Swadeshi movement had lost its momentum by 1917 and how Gandhi's call for Swaraj became the leading force for independence. See Gordon 1979:79, 160, 171.
36 See for example, Gordon 1979:85–87; Bandyopadhyay 1988:32–3.
37 Ibid., 87.
38 Gordon 1979:106–34, and in particular p. 122.
39 Bandyopadhyay 1979:53.
40 Gordon 1979:viii.
41 See for example Kohli 1990:270–2.
42 Gordon 1979:149. At this time the Anushilan Samiti, with its headquarters in Dacca, was another an active terrorist group but it was even less successful than the Jugantar Party. Interesting accounts of these movements are found in Gordon 1979 and Ray 1984.
43 See, for example, Butler, Lahiri and Roy 1991.
44 One journalist, Mr. Mitra of the *Times of India* (interview 4 March 1996, Calcutta) vaguely remembered an event in the early 1980s when an airport official, Mr. Malhotra, was painted with tar by members of Amra Bengali. The political statement intended by this action is unclear.
45 See Basu 1992, for an analysis of the role of ethnicity in protest movements in West Bengal.
46 The Naxalite movement is a revolutionary mobilization of landless peasants against landlords. Naxalite violence was at its most widespread between 1967 and the early 1970s. See for example Rudolph and Rudolph 1987:390, and p. 466, n. 21 for a list of references on the Naxalite movement.
47 See Kathuria 1990:119–22, 169–71; Kohli 1990:282–3.
48 For example, the present popularity of the leftist Muslim poet Kasi Nazrul Islam goes back to the 1930s when the CPI was formed. The roots of the leftist movement in the state go further back to the turn of the century.
49 Consider, for example, the arguments that Lega Nord has used for demanding partition of Italy. The partition line, although vaguely defined, coincides well with socioeconomic divisions that can be studied in, for example Graziano 1994:366.
50 These events are thoroughly examined by Kohli, 1990:274–96. In particular, see p. 287.
51 See Kohli 1990:286; Butler, Lahiri and Roy 1991.
52 See chapter four.
53 This may be compared to Bingham Powell, who draws the general conclusion that representational systems are less prone to violence than majoritarian parliamentary systems. Powell 1982:109, 222–3.
54 See Kohli 1990 and 1987.
55 In the rest of India President's Rule was frequently used by the central government during this period.
56 The operation was devoted to the registration of Bargadars in order to secure tenancy rights. Bhattacharyya 1994.

57 Ibid., 81. It should be mentioned that in his survey of the situation of the bargadars (see Kohli 1990:129–31) Kohli reaches the opposite conclusion. Furthermore, Bhattacharyya himself acknowledges that he sees Operation Barga as having had a beneficial impact on most of the bargadars recorded. Still, the rate of recording, 'and other components of agrarian reforms when expressed in quantifiable terms, dropped. This, however, did not affect the popularity of the LF significantly. That is why I consider the 'mode of reforms' very important, not because 'the situation of many bargadars (sharecroppers) has not improved in spite of the land reforms'.' E-mail conversation with Bhattacharyya 1997.
58 Ibid., 83. Bhattacharyya quotes Ghosh 1986:117.
59 Bhattacharyya 1994:79.
60 Ruud 1994:358–9, also see pp. 368–69, 373.
61 This information has been provided by the Ministry of Land Reforms in West Bengal and is also based on interviews with officials there.
62 Bhattacharyya 1994:73.
63 Bhattacharyya 1994:72.
64 At least if we refer only to the identification and vesting of benami land.
65 The population of West Bengal according to the 1971 census.
66 Ruud 1994:373, the estimate is made for a family of five.
67 Which also Kohli points out. See, for example, Kohli 1987:143.
68 If one takes into consideration the small population of Jammu and Kashmir at the time, this may be considered the most extensive land reform program in India ever.
69 The total number of MLAs who signed the list was thirteen, twelve of them being Congress (I) members. See chapter four.
70 Interview with Jyoti Basu 6 March 1996. The 87 years old Jyoti Basu handed in his resignation as chief minister on 28 October 2000.
71 Varshney 1992.
72 In other words, placing the cultural character in the middle, between integration and disintegration, represents the idea that this variable can play a role in both types of development.
73 The ideal would have been to compare socioeconomic development in all three states from the 1930s to the 1990s including adjusted values for per capita income and production. The lack of reliable data unfortunately make such a comparison impossible. The intention is therefore only to suggest that, in very general terms, none of the states investigated represent uniquely different or atypical success stories in terms of socioeconomic development.
74 For a more detailed discussion see Widmalm 1997a. Data for the comparisons between the states were collected from Butler, Lahiri and Roy 1991 and 1996; Chandhok 1990; Bose 1991; Statistical Abstract India; Sharma and Mishra 1995.
75 At least not since the 1970s.
76 See Kohli 1987:117–43.
77 An official in the Ministry of Land Reforms in West Bengal, gave further support for Bhattacharyya's argument. This official (who wanted to remain anonymous) emphasized that in order to achieve any redistribution targets, correct information on land holdings is crucial. And simply managing to carry out the registrations that the CPI(M) did was a major achievement.





## 6 'THE MOST DANGEROUS PLACE IN THE WORLD'

1 Judith Miller and James Risen. 'U.S. Fearful That a Pakistan-India War Could Turn Nuclear,' *International Herald Tribune* (from the New York Times News Service), 9 August 2000.
2 This was the opinion expressed by, for example, Jan Prawitz, nuclear arms expert at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs in a radio interview, Swedish Radio P1, 11 August 2000.
3 See Lebow 1984.
4 Allison 1971:246.
5 Allison 1971:67, 144.
6 Tsebelis 1990.
7 At least according to United News of India, and Brown 1996.
8 The Lok Sabah election held in Jammu and Kashmir in May were boycotted by the National Conference and plagued by coercion. Official sources claim that the election had a 50–60 per cent voter turnout; eyewitnesses, however, say that voters were forced by soldiers and security forces to participate in for example Anantnag and Baramulla. (See Baweja 1996.) In September however, the National Conference participated in the State Assembly election which saw far less coercion exercised by the security forces and yet a relatively high and more 'genuine' voter turnout. (See Badhwar 1996).
9 More background is provided in Vinayak 2000; Ganguly 1997:169–71. It seems that recently the Harkut-ul-Mujahedin has merged its forces with the Jaish-e-Mohammad led by the Maulana Masood Azhar (who will be discussed later in this chapter).
10 Most likely the Al Faran was just an extension of the Harkat-ul-Ansar. It was Al Faran that carried out the kidnapping of five Western tourists in 1995. The Harkut-ul-Ansar, several sources claim were deeply involved in the hijacking of the Indian Airline flight IC 814 in December 1999.
11 Hersh 1993.
12 Hersh 1993:56.
13 Only the Congress (I) has managed to stay in office for a full five-year term since independence.
14 Cherian 1998.
15 Swami 1998.
16 See Widmalm, 1999:45.
17 The Ghauri missile is based on Scud-technology and is in many ways a replica of North Korea's Nodong missile. See Wright, David C., http://www.fas.org/news/pakistan/1998/05/980512-ghauri.htm (31 August 2000).
18 Vinayak 1999.

19 Gokhale, Nitin A., and Murali Krishnan'.War and Witch-Hunts,' *Outlook*, 2 October 2000.
20 http://www.time.com/time/magazine/articles/0,3266,35101,00.html (15 August 2000).
21 See Koithara. 1999; Nayyar 1997:407; http://jammu-kashmir.org/KIN/Heroes/ (14 August 2000). Thanks to Margareta Sollenberg at the Department of Peace and Conflict Studies at Uppsala Univerity who helped to provide information for the estimate that about 1500 soldiers and civilians died in the Kargil war.
22 Chawla 2000.
23 Swami, Praveen. 'The Autonomy Demand' in *Frontline* (Vol. 17, issue 14) 8–21 July 2000.
24 It should be pointed out that saying that a demand is within or outside the framework of the Indian constitution is a common way to denote whether or not an argument or political position should be seen as valid. The demand for a separate state or accession to Pakistan is a demand declared by the Indian government as being'outside the Indian constitution' and it is therefore to be regarded as illegitimate and non-negotiable. The first discussions between the Hizbul Mujahedin and the Indian Government in August 2000 almost failed even in their initial stages since some politicians within the BJP demanded that it should be stated that any talks should be held 'within the framework of the constitution'. Such a statement would have sent an indication to the separatists that India would refuse to trade anything for peace in Kashmir. Vajpayee, however, avoided the early failure by explaining to his party-men that any negotiations would naturally be implicitly carried out within the framework of the constitution. Since it was never said directly to the separatists, they could save their face and actually initiate a dialogue. What happened next is described below.
25 Actually who exactly did what in these events is highly contested. The debate between Prem Shankar Jha and Pankaj Mishra reveals some of the most crucial standpoints. See for example Mishra, Pankaj. 'Paper Jehadis and the Lie of the Land', *Outlook*, 9 October 2000.
26 Swami 2000.
27 Just how friendly India has become towards the US was made clear when Vladimir Putin visited India in October 2000. In contrast to when Clinton made his visit, elected Indian politicians had to be persuaded to attend Putin's speech in the Parliament to avoid embarrassment.
28 See for example; PTI. 'Musharraf admits shift in US policy on Pak', *Pioneer*, 12 September 2000.
29 Mukherjee, Rini. 'City readies to welcome Durga,' *Hindustan Times* (section 'Live', in the Bhopal edition), 27 September 2000.
30 One concrete example is that the US decided in October 2000 to share intelligence information about 'terrorists' with India – especially information about Afghanistan-based groups and the activities of Osama Bin Laden. See 'US to provide classified terrorism-related information to India,' *The New Indian Express* (Thiruvanantapuram), 9 October 2000.
31 Thapar, Vishal. 'ICBMs any day, says Kalam,' *Hinduatan Times* (Bhopal), 18 September 2000.





32 PTI. 'Pak could use N-bomb,' The Hindu (Thiruvananthapuram), 17 October 2000.

## 7 EPILOGUE: THE CAUSES OF VIOLENT SEPARATISM AND THE ROLE OF ETHNICITY

1 This is in consistent with the conclusions arrived at by Muller and Seligson (1987:81–2), Schock (1996:), discussed in chapter two. Also see Wang (1993:979, 982).
2 See, for example, Brass' discussion on definitions of ethnicity relating to 'objective attributes, with reference to subjective feelings, and in relation to behaviour.' Among others, the ideas of Fredrik Barth are briefly discussed. See Brass 1991:18–23.
3 Therefore, one ambition here has been to banish certain 'demons' from the debate on the role of ethnicity in politics. It is an ambition inspired by Herbert Tingsten's arguments against metaphysical explanations in our research. See Hermansson 1992:179.
4 Przeworski, 1985:51–5.
5 Ibid.
6 Ibid., 70. Also see Hardin 1995:6–10, for a discussion of this.
7 This makes Downs' version of spatial competition (1957) more relevant than Horowitz' hypothesis on the same problem (see chapter two). Downs' assumes that party systems may act according to either the centrifugal or the centripetal model, but this is not dependent on whether the party is based on class or ethnicity.
8 See Rothstein 1987:295–311.

# APPENDIX

## State Assembly Elections in Jammu and Kashmir 1962–1996

Table A.1

| | 1962 | 1967 | 1972 | 1977 | 1983 | 1987 | 1996 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Turnout in % | 72.8 | 58.8 | 66.3 | 67.7 | 73.2 | 75 | 54 |
| INC | – | 61 (53) | 58 (55.4) | 11 (16.9) | 26 (30.3) | 26 20.2) | 7 (19.3) |
| JKNC | 70 (67) | 8 (17.1) | – | 47 (46.2) | 46 (47.3) | 40 (33) | 59) (36.1 |
| BJS/BJP | – | 3 (16.5) | 3 (9.8) | – | – (3.2) | 2 (5.1) | 8 (11.9) |
| JP | – | – | – | 13 (23.7) | – (0.3) | – | – |
| JMI/MUF | – | – | 5 (7.2) | 1 (3.6) | – (3.9) | 4 ( 20) | – |
| Independents | 2 (7.4) | 3 (8.6) | 9 (26.8) | 4 (9.5) | 2 (10.1) | 4 (14.5) | 2 |
| Other parties | 3 (23.7) | –(4.9) | –(0.8) | –(0.1) | 1 (5.1) | – (7.0) | 13 |
| Number of seats | 75 | 75 | 75 | 76 | 75 | 76 | 87 |
| Number of seats uncontested | 34 | 22 | 5 | – | – | – | – |

*Sources*: Butler, Lahiri and Roy 1991 and 1996; Election Commission of India 1987; Singh and Bose 1987; Warikoo 1996; Padam Rosha, 'Fundamentalism in Kashmir,' *Indian Express*, 14 August 1987.

Numbers alongside the party names show the number of seats, with the percentage of votes in parenthesis.





| *Abbreviation* | *Organisation/Party* |
|---|---|
| INC | Indian National Congress, Indian National Congress (Indira) |
| JKNC | Jammu and Kashmir National Conference |
| BJS/BJP | Bharatiya Jana Sangh (until 1975), Bharatiya Janata Party (from 1983) |
| JP | Janata Party |
| JMI/MUF | Jamaat-e-Islami/ Muslim United Front (see explanation below) |

### *A brief comment on the elections in Jammu and Kashmir*

The will to participate in the democratic process is quite high in Jammu and Kashmir. In the State Assembly elections held between 1977 and 1983, participation was about ten percentage units higher in Jammu and Kashmir than the Indian average.[1] The violent and extreme conditions under which the 1996 election was held still make the number of voters uncertain. However, the Vidhan Sabha election was, considering the political conditions of the area, relatively sucessful and far less coercion in comparison to the Lok Sabha election the same year. The gender gap is the same in Jammu and Kashmir as the average in India. In 1987 the voter turnout was 74.9%–78.6% for men and 70.4% for women.[2]

A few points need to be made concerning the above table. First, most sources state that the first State Assembly Elections were held in Jammu and Kashmir in 1962[3], while Lamb and Verma give the date as 1957. The reason for this is that the Constituent Assembly in Jammu and Kashmir decided to hold its first election to the state Assembly before the Indian General Election in 1962. This election was not held under the auspices of the Indian Election Commission[4] and this is likely the reason why it is seldom counted

[1] The average turnout in the Vidhan Sabha Elections in India was 58.8% during the period 1977–1978, and 58.5% in 1980–83. See Singh and Bose 1987:12.

[2] The average voter turnout in India for Lok Sabha elections between 1957 and 1989 was 63.5 percent for men and 51.4 percent for women. By 1989, however, the gap had decreased substantially since 1957, when only 38.8 percent of the women and 57.3 percent of the men voted. In 1989 57.3 percent of the women and 66.1 percent of the men voted. See Butler, Lahiri and Roy 1991:7–11. Female representation in the State Assembly is almost nonexistent. In the 1987 election one woman was elected. See Verma, 1994, pp. 185–6.

[3] See for example Butler, Lahiri and Roy 1991:172; Singh and Bose 1987:37, 497.

[4] See Singh 1982:64–5; Saraf 1979:1259–60.

as a 'real' election in most of the literature. Furthermore, the 1957 election was boycotted by the Plebiscite Front and consequently the National Conference, led by Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, won 68 out of 75 seats with little or no competition.[5] Secondly, contrary to some sources, there is no doubt that the Jamaat-e-Islami has contested all elections between 1972 and 1987. The Jamaat-e-Tulba (the youth wing of the Jamaat-e-Islami), however, boycotted the 1983 election.[6] Thirdly, in most tables of election results from Jammu and Kashmir, it appears as if the Jamaat-e-Islami won no seats in 1987. This gives the impression that they disappeared from the political scene, which is of course incorrect. This misunderstanding is due to the fact that all the candidates in the 1987 MUF-coalition, including the Jamaat-e-Islami representatives, have been labelled as 'independents.'[7] But as we saw in chapter four on political developments in Jammu and Kashmir during the 1980s, the Jamaat-e-Islami competed and won seats in the 1987 election, but under the MUF umbrella. I have therefore placed the MUF in the same category as Jamaat-e-Islami. We should, however, be aware that in 1987 the MUF contained other political groups and leaders as well, although the Jamaat-e-Islami clearly constituted its dominating core. The four candidates who competed under the MUF banner and finally became MLAs were (constituencies in parenthesis): Syed Ali Shah Geelani (Sopore), Haji Abdul Pazak Mir (Kulgam), Ghulam Nabi (Homshalibug), and Mohammad Syeed Shah (Anantnag). Geelani and Mir were from the Jamaat-e-Islami. And, according to Geelani and Thoker, 22 of the 46 who stood as MUF candidates came from Jamaat-e-Islami.[8] The composition of the MUF would, however, dramatically change in 1987–89. In July 1987 Abdul Gani Lone of the People's Conference and G.M. Shah's Awami National Conference (former National Conference (Khalida)) joined the MUF.[9] And a year later, the new

[5] See Singh 1982:64; Lamb 1991:204; Verma 1994:116–7.

[6] See Jagmohan 1991:181; M.L. Kak, 'Were J&K elections rigged?,' *Tribune* (Chandigarh), 11 June 1993; "Abdullah's Triumph," *Indian Express*, 11 June 1983.

[7] See Election Commission of India 1987. Despite enquiries to the Commission, no explanation of this has been forthcoming.

[8] Interview with Syed Ali Shah Geelani and Abdul Ahad Thoker, Srinagar 14 February 1996.

[9] See 'Muslim United Front faces rift,' *Tribune*, 8 July 1987. The information concerning which independent members were a part of the MUF was supplied by Syed Ali Shah Geelani and Abdul Ahad Thoker on 14 February 1996.





working committee decided to expel the four elected MLAs and the Jamaat-e-Islami from the organization.[10] Internal rivalry was a major problem, just as it is in the Hurriyat today. It was large sections of the MUF, including the Jamaat-e-Islami, which later formed the Hurriyat, which boycotted the 1996 election.

[10] See 'MUF confirms expulsion of 4 MLAs,' *Indian Express*, 22 June 1988.

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